UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

A STUDY OF THE THAÏS LEGEND

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO

HROTHSVITHA'S "PAPHNUTIUS"

BY

OSWALD ROBERT KUEHNE

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN GERMANICS

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

1922

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BENJAMIN W. MITCHELL PH.D.
MAGISTRO ET AMICO
HOC OPUSCULUM
GRATO ANIMO DEDICO.

PREFACE

Ever since 1890, when Anatole France by virtue of his broad, humanistic learning succeeded in giving a new lease of life to the almost moribund Thaïs legend, great interest has been shown over nearly all of Europe and America in this most fascinating story. Massenet's opera has still further heightened the glamor which the smiling scepticism of Anatole France and the almost anesthetizing seduction of his style had thrown about the story of the sainted courtesan. Although the great French novelist showed no reluctance about acknowledging his great debt to Hrotsvitha, she has never been given the credit she has deserved in the perpetuation of this saintly legend, so full of artistic possibilities. Even the careful Abbé Nau entirely missed her drama in his otherwise thorough study of the Thaïs story.

But in particular, for the English speaking peoples, Hrotsvitha, that extraordinary phenomenon of the tenth century has been hardly more than a name until very recently. For the last half century she has been pigeonholed, as it were, in general works on the drama and literature under the very complimentary title of the first European dramatist, and in this way she has come into a sort of distant and bewildered regard. But even up to this date no complete translation of her plays exists in the English language, although in French there are two, one by the pioneer scholar in this field, Magnin (1845), and a more recent one by Vellini (1907). On the score of the great work by Magnin and the only complete translation of her eight legends in any modern language by Vignon Rétif de la Bretonne (1854), the German nun seemed to have become a compatriot of Joan of Arc. It was only by the almost uncanny scholarship of Paul von Winterfeld shown in the preparation of his monumental edition which appeared in 1902, that she was repatriated permanently, for there is now little left for any scholar to do in regard to the text. As Karl Strecker expressed it in his article on *Hrotsvit von Gandersheim*, "Mit dieser Ausgabe ist endlich eine Ehrenschuld der Deutschen eingelöst."

For England and America, however, there is still much to do, although of recent years a creditable start has been made in the direction of a closer acquaintanceship. The first scholarly article of any pretension in the English tongue appeared in the *English Historical Review* of 1888. This twenty-six page account by Hudson gave a critical and very capable epitome of the researches up to that date and has in a sense never been surpassed. For nearly a quarter of a century her repose again remained undisturbed. In 1909, a very sympathetic but sketchy account was written by Alice Kemp-Welch in the *Nineteenth Century* and five years later another general account intermingled with translated passages from the plays made its appearance in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*. In 1916, Arthur F. McCann found it of help in making an English translation of one of Hrotsvitha's plays, *Dulcitius*, for the use of students in the course in the Old English drama taught at Cornell University by Professor Joseph Q. Adams. In the next year appeared the popular, but at the same time scholarly and well written account of Mrs. Evangeline Wilbour Blashfield in her book *Portraits and Backgrounds*. It is probably only a question of time before it will be found necessary to translate her works in full, so great is the interest in the German nun becoming.

It cannot be my purpose to attempt anything so ambitious as that here. My aim will be to trace the Thaïs legend from its obscure beginnings to Hrotsvitha, through the Middle Ages, to its resuscitation by Anatole France and his imitators. Hrotsvitha's version will be especially stressed and made more prominent by attempting an English translation of her play, not only because this was the first purely literary use made of the Thaïs legend but because it was of great influence on Anatole France's novel. Although it is a very difficult and hazardous matter to try to show analogies between two authors with such divergent aims and difference in complexity, separated by more than a millenium, an attempt will nevertheless be made to point out a few of the more obvious details in which the French novelist followed our holy nun.

This subject first suggested itself to me while writing a paper on Hrotsvitha for the Germanic Seminar of 1919–20 under the direction of Professor D. B. Shumway of the University of Pennsylvania, whose kind assistance and encouragement have been of the greatest help to me not only in the preparation of this dissertation but also in my work in the Graduate School and before that, in the College. Grateful acknowledgment is also due him and to Dr. B. W. Mitchell of Central High School for careful proof-reading.

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CHAPTER I

THE LEGEND

DISCOVERY OF THE THAÏS MUMMY

With the triumph of Anatole France's novel fresh in the mind of the public, the discovery in 1899–1900, of the tomb and the body of a holy woman named Thaïs in the excavation of the Greco-Byzantine Necropolis of Antinoë in Lower Egypt by Al. Gayet aroused more than ordinary interest. It consisted of a narrow chamber two meters long by eighty centimeters wide built of stones cemented together and covered by a semi-circular arch. Inside the total height was sixty centimeters. At the head end, toward the east was a niche with an inscription traced in red ink on rough stucco. Although the scaly plaster had fallen off in places, the three lines which it had once formed, have been restored as follows:

✠ΕΚΟΙΜΗΘΗΜΑ
ΚΑΡΙΑΘΑΙΑΣ
. . . ΘΕΣΣΑΛ

"Here lies the blessed Thaïs," and in the doubtful letters of the third line, a proper name which perhaps means, "Daughter of Thessal . ."

A few other marks of no particular significance are found on the outer part of the rest of the tomb.

Inside, a worm-eaten and crumbling coffin enclosed a body arrayed in the usual arrangement of fillets passed about the costume that covered the corpse. Most of the archeological interest centered in the objects arranged about the body, which impart to her sepulchre a distinctly religious character not found in other tombs of the same necropolis:

1 A basket and goblet case of woven palm fibres to contain the Sacrament which the Oriental Christians buried with the dead.

2 A chaplet of wood and ivory, which, consisting as it does of a series of circles arranged in tiers, is thought to be a kind of ancient rosary to keep reckoning or count of devotions.

3 A rose of Jericho, the symbol of immortality and resurrection, held between the skeleton fingers.

4. A cross, still recalling in form the *ankh* of the Egyptians, the *crux ansata*, a symbol of life and re-birth; it was the amulet that assured the renewal of one's being in a series of indefinite resurrections.

5. Some palm leaves, the emblem of a martyr's triumph.

When Gayet came to the problem of assigning a date to this grave, he took as his starting point the fact that all the surrounding tombs ranged between the fourth and fifth centuries. Conversion to Christianity in Egypt began at about the time of the persecution of Diocletian (295–311) and the edict that consecrated the peace of the Church. It was the time when proselytism was peopling the desert with anchorets. Saint Anthony, Saint Macarius and Saint Pachomius had all lived during the fourth century, and Maria, the sister of Saint Pachomius, had just founded (i. e. about 345), the first convent at Athribis, to-day Sohaq, in upper Egypt. Hermitic and cenobitic life had reached the apogee of its development. It is highly probable that the grave of Thaïs antedates most of the others nearby because it seems to be in the center of the cemetery in which it is located and all the others seem to be grouped around it in concentric circles. Taking all these facts into consideration, Al. Gayet dates it very early, i. e., toward the middle of the fourth century. But this is only an hypothesis.

It was inevitable that the question should arise as to whether this Thaïs was the same as the Thaïs of Christian legend and a controversy over it arose immediately. Our cautious archeologist could only make this non-committal statement: "Je n'ai aucun document me permettant d'identifier Thaïs d'Antinoë à la Thaïs historique; je n'en ai aucun, non plus, m'autorisant à nier la possibilité de cette identification."

One of the points most hotly discussed was the costume. It was objected that a saint would hardly be buried in such rich-toned draperies so foreign to monkish asceticism. To this objection Al. Gayet replied that there are numerous examples where a simple garment was shed for more resplendant festal clothes to make the appearance before the Divine Presence more impressive. The words of Saint Macarius of Thebais are quoted in support of this practice, who, when summoned before the governor of Antinoé for having set fire to a pagan

temple at Ranopolis, retorted, on being advised by his disciples to change his tattered tunic for a more decent habit," I am keeping my new robe to appear before my Savior." In a shrine of the far distant Nitrian convent, too, there is still found today the body of Maximus, one of the sons of Emperor Valentinian of Constantinople, clothed in a robe of purple and a cloak laminated with gold, although after becoming a monk subsequent to his flight from the court he had lived on a par with his brothers in a coarse brown serge. The richness and beauty of a secular dress, therefore, proves nothing against the asceticism or sanctity of the wearer. In fact, these garments may have been those which the penitent wore when she was induced to forsake her role as a woman of the world to become a potential heavenly spouse.

THE TOMB OF SARAPION.

Little significance was attributed at the time of the discovery to the proximity of the tomb of a Sarapion of Antinoë, identical in aspect to that of Thaïs. There was no inscription at all on the tomb, but two lines on a potsherd lying close by acquaint us with the name of the inmate:

ΣΑΡΑΠΙΩΝ
ΚΟΡΝΩΣΘΑΛΟΥ "Sarapion, (son of)? Kornosthalos.

It is safe to infer that the date of the tomb is about the same as of that occupied by Thaïs. Sarapion's costume consists of a robe of brown serge and a cloak of black serge, sandals studded with nails, a staff sheathed in leather, a belt, bracelets and anklets of iron, and a collar from which a cross is suspended.

In the light of the investigations into the manuscripts dealing with the Thaïs legend, conducted by Abbé F. Nau, the proximity of this tomb proves to be of the greatest importance, since it shows that for over a millenium the conversion of the notorious courtesan has been erroneously attributed to a saint, whose connection with her could only have been a doubtful one at best.

THE STORY OF THAIS AND PAPHNUTIUS.

According to the popular version current before Nau made his investigations, Thaïs was a courtesan of extraordinary beauty, who was the ruination of all the young men of Alexandria. Saint Paphnutius decided to rescue her from this sinful life. He sought her out, and, taking as a starting point her casual mention of God, he reminded her that she would be strictly held to account for the crimes she committed and instigated. Frightened by a frank allusion to hell torture, Thaïs repented her evil deeds, burned all her possessions and followed Paphnutius. He sealed her in a cell near a convent and left her there for three years. At the end of that time he sought out Saint Anthony to find out from him if the Lord had granted Thaïs pardon for her sins. During the next night Paul the Simple, a disciple of Saint Anthony, had a vision in which he saw her in heaven guarded by three virgins with shining countenances. When morning came he told his dream and Paphnutius, convinced that forgiveness had been granted Thaïs for her sins, made arrangements to have her enter the convent and mingle with the other sisters. She died fifteen days later.

THAIS AND SARAPION.

The discovery of the mummies of Thaïs and Sarapion, described above, led Nau to make a more careful study of the Thaïs legend in manuscripts and other documents. He had the various important libraries of Europe ransacked and made most revolutionary discoveries. Especially important was an uncatalogued redaction of an original Greek *Life* found at Paris. Soon afterwards copies of other Greek redactions preserved at Rome, Berlin, Jerusalem, Oxford and London were secured and collated. The most remarkable detail that these manuscripts had in common was that they all attributed the conversion of Thaïs, not to Paphnutius, but to Sarapion, and to be still more specific, to Sarapion the Sindonite, a monk well known in other respects.

The Greek Menologies seem to confirm these Greek manuscripts, since they do not attribute the conversion of Thaïs to Sarapion, but to *Paphnutius, the Sindonite.* Now, none of the known Paphnutii ever bore this epithet, as the Bollandists

testify[1], who in the same passage also give up the attempt to explain the discrepancy. What actually happened seems to have been that the comparatively recent author of the Menologies had under his eyes, in the Greek texts, the words *Sarapion the Sindonite*, and believed that in accordance with the Latin versions, he had to replace Sarapion by Paphnutius, a circumstance which led to the nonsensical *Paphnutius, the Sindonite*, never satisfactorily explained[2]. Moreover, not one of the accounts devoted to the various Paphnutii contains anything that would connect them with the Paphnutius of the Latin Life of Thaïs. They even seem to have been incapable of playing this heroic role, to judge from Nau's résumé of the incidents in the lives of various Paphnutii[3] that might resemble our legend most nearly.

This does not hold true, however, of the different Sarapions.

1. According to the author of the *Apophthegmata Patrum* or *Sayings of the Fathers* Sarapion converted a courtesan and in this account of the fourth or fifth century Nau sees the prototype of the Thaïs legend. A translation of this account will follow when the sources of the legend come up for discussion.

2. Furthermore, according to the *Historia Lausiaca* of Palladius as printed in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* XXXIV, col. 1180, Sarapion was called Ἀπαθής, apathetic, i. e. he did not allow himself to be put in temptation's way.

3. According to Saint Athanasius, Sarapion frequently saw Saint Anthony, who revealed to him from the top of his mountain what was going on in Egypt, and gave directions that at his death one of his leather tunics should go to Bishop Sarapion.

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[1] Cf. *Acta Sanctorum*, Oct. IV, p. 224.

[2] H. Delehaye (*Analecta Bollandiana* XXIV, p. 400) is unwilling to admit the hypothesis that the authors of the Menologies could have made use of the Latin versions of the Thaïs legend. This objection may be overcome by supposing that the change may have already occured in the Greek manuscripts, although no instance of it has yet been found.

[3] Cf. "*Annales de Musée Guimet*" XXX pt. 3, 53.

4. He was a disciple of Saint Anthony; it was therefore very natural to suppose that he should go to consult him.[4]

In short, according to Greek texts of the Life of Thaïs, the Greek Menologies and other parallel accounts, Nau seems justified in believing that the conversion of Thaïs was attributed at first to Sarapion and not to Paphnutius.

The question now arises as to how the name of Paphnutius could subsequently have been substituted. Not only was this substitution made, as is found in the Latin versions, but in a Syriac Life of Sarapion Sindonata of the seventh century the translator replaced Sarapion by Bessarion. The conjecture that Nau makes is that since two analogous stories in Greek of converted courtesans (*Apophthegmata* and the *Life of Thaïs*) were attributed to Sarapion, one was thought to be sufficient

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[4] It should not disturb us to notice that all the various details attributed to Sarapion of the passages alluded to above, may not refer to the same Sarapion. Butler in his *Lausiac History of Palladius* II (213–214) has listed eight Sarapions that occur in Egyptian monastic literature:

1. Sarapion Sindonata, the hero of chapter XXXVII of the *Historia Lausicaca*.

2. Sarapion or Sarapamon, disciple of Saint Anthony and author of the Coptic Life of Macarius of Egypt.

3. Sarapion, surnamed the Great, a Nitrian monk; it is doubtless his name which stands along with those of Paphnutius and the Macarii in the title of the Latin *Regulae Patrum* in the *Codex Regularum*. It is barely possible that such juxtaposition might have led to the confusion now under discussion.

4. Sarapion of Scete, who gave the fifth of Cassian's Collations. (3) and (4) may be the same.

5. Sarapion of Arsinoitis.

6. Sarapion the Anthropomorphite was probable different from all the above.

Two bishops of the name occur in connection with the monks:

7. Sarapion, bishop of Thmoui, the friend of Saint Athanasius and Anthony, to whom belongs the recently discovered Sacramentary.

8. Sarapion, bishop of Tentyra, who figures frequently in the Pachomian documents.

It is quite probable that in those days of ill-kept records and irresponsible oral tradition, the author of the Life of Thaïs may wittingly or unwittingly have built up a composite of some or all the various Sarapions, a supposition that seems very plausible especially in view of the substitutions of other names in the Menologies and the Latin and Syriac versions. Indeed, R. Reitzenstein in *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen* (64–80) believes in a Sarapion-Corpus, the anecdotes of which were utilized by hagiographs.

for his glory and each translator attributed the other to the hero of his predilection. This surmise is not without support. For instance, a long Syriac life of Sarapion Sindonata which has been printed by Bedjan in *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum* (t. VII, Paris 1897) incorporates most of what is contained in Chapter XXXVII of the *Historia Lausiaca*, but in much extended form. Moreover, it relates as of Sarapion four anecdotes told of others by Palladius. What is to prevent us from supposing that other compilers should not feel equally free to take an anecdote away from Sarapion and attribute it to Paphnutius, as in the Latin versions, and to Bessarion, as in the Syriac and Arabic version, or even to fictitious characters as to Athanaël in Massenet's Opera and to Damiel in Paul Wilstach's drama? In like manner, what prevented Anatole France from assigning to Paphnutius episodes that are definitely known to belong to others in Eyptian monastic history?

For the time being, however, let us return to a consideration of the identity of Sarapion, who according to the Greek texts is surnamed the Sindonite, because he always wore a robe called a σινδών. The legend concerning him figures very prominently in two works already mentioned:

1. *Historia Lausiaca*, Chapt. XXXVII, written in 420 A. D. by Palladius. It consists of a series of biographical sketches of monks whom he had known either personally, or through the reports of their disciples.

2. *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*[5], a more extended version in which lengthy prayers, harangues and discussions have been introduced throughout the narrative. In spite of its early date (one manuscript was written in 569), there can be no doubt but that it is an apocryphal compilation, which the author based on the *Historia Lausiaca*, supplemented by materials drawn from the *Paradisus Patrum* which constitutes the seventh volume of the same work by Père R. P. Bedjan and also from other sources, but probably in great measure from his own fancy. Nau has given us an analysis of the Syriac redaction of this legend of Sarapion, who, although he is not styled the Sindonite, is undoubtedly the same man discussed by Palladius. This account is replete with wild adventures, extensive travels and extravagant miracles.

[5] (263–341 t. V, Paris 1895.)

The most remarkable part of the biography comes toward the end, where it tells us that Sarapion wore an iron belt and that he was buried in a stone tomb near a monastery inhabited by the monks under Saint Pachomius. His belt must have been of a complicated model, for "it had caused numerous wounds on his flesh." This description fits almost exactly the description of Sarapion now in the Musée Guimet, who also wore a simple robe and a girdle of iron and who was found in a stone tomb.

An English translation of Nau's French translation of Bedjan's Syriac text follows:

STORY OF THE BEAUTIFUL DEEDS OF THE HERMIT SARAPION WHO WAS A MONK.

* * * * * *

At this word he delivered up his soul, and immediately the brothers unsealed the door of the cell, entered and carried him out. When they stripped him of his robe to anoint him with oil, *they found that his body was encircled with an iron girdle which had caused numerous wounds on his flesh.* Then they praised and blessed God for the constancy of the blessed one, and after that they interred him with great honor, as was proper.

When the report of Sarapion's death reached Rome and Athens, the hipparch Hermogenes, who had been converted by the Blessed One together with a multitude of people of the city, started on the march; many Athenians left also and went to the desert, to the monastery of Saint Pachomius; the *women of the monasteries who had been taught by Sarapion* also betook themselves to the desert with a virile courage, to see the tomb of the saint. When they arrived at the monastery of Pachomius, they wished to take the bones of Saint Sarapion and carry them away in order to do honor to them in the city; they worked hard *at the stone coffin in which the Just was placed*, but there was no way of opening it; *they understood then that the monastery of Pachomius* was to be Sarapion's resting place, they praised and extolled God, then they returned to their homes, where they commemorated his death every year.

The proximity of the tomb of Thaïs has therefore a peculiar significance, for according to data referred to by Butler[6] there was a Pachomian monastery near Hermopolis Magna, a short distance from Antinoë across the Nile. From Palladius (Chap. LVIII) we learn, too, that there were many monasteries around Antinoë and (Chapt. LIX) that in the same city were twelve convents for women, one of which may well have been the convent wherein Sarapion placed Thaïs for her lifelong penance. So that information available in other historical documents easily admits of the notion that Sarapion and Thaïs may both have died near Antinoë.

The question which Butler puts so incisively arises: "Are we in the presence of a strange congeries of concidences, or are these really the bodies of Sarapion the Sindonite and Thaïs the Penitent?" Butler's answer to the question he puts himself is the only one possible from a scientific point of view. He admits: "There would be a certain fitness, and a pathos, in the thought that Sarapion was buried alongside of the woman whom he had reclaimed from a life of sin." But "a definite pronouncement seems impossible; the names Sarapion and Thaïs (or kindred forms) are of common occurrence in the papyri." From all this it is evident that we cannot assume that the identification is at present absolute. Nevertheless it is a sentimental satisfaction to know that their bodies are still lying side by side in the Musée Guimet in Paris. Let us hope that they may eventually prove to be those of the famous monk and the woman he converted.[7]

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[6] op. cit. II (216).

[7] It is interesting in this connection to note the review of Nau's work the *Analecta Bollandiana* XXIV (400–401, where Pere Delehaye scouts the possibility that these mummies are historical. In the first place he asserts that if Ταϊσία is a Coptic word derived from Isis (see footnote 8) and the definite article, as Nau thinks, the spelling Θαΐας excludes the possibility of this derivation. How much weight this argument has, I do not know; for the spelling Θαΐας found on a tomb three hundred miles down the Nile would certainly be as Egyptian as Ταϊσία and furthermore these spellings do not appear to me irreconcilable. As for the Sarapion found in the tomb, Delehaye thinks he is only an imitator of the famous Sarapion with the iron girdle, because according to the *Historia Lausiaca* by Palladius (chap. XXXVII) Sarapion the Sindonite was buried at Rome. But this is a doubtful matter; for, although the reading of the best Greek texts has Ῥώμῃ, others have

THE SOURCES OF THE LEGEND.

After this general discussion it is now in order to go into what Nau considers the sources of the legend.

I

According to an old story written down in the fourth century, or at the latest in the fifth, the reverent Sarapion was passing through a village in Egypt and saw a courtesan. The story of her conversion is found in various documents.:

1. In the *Apophthegmata Patrum* in a chapter of which the redaction may be placed in the fourth or fifth century.

2. In the Syriac manuscript at London, add. 17176, dated 532 A. D.

3. In the *Apophthegmata*, with alphabetic order of the authors, of the sixth century.

4. In the Syriac compilation of the *Paradisus Patrum*, which is dated at the latest in the sixth century.

5. Sometimes this story has also been interpolated in the story of Sarapion the Sindonite in some Parisian manuscripts of Palladius.

It must be mentioned that in the manuscripts and redactions that have come to light, the name of the woman is not given and Sarapion has no epithet serving to identify him.

The most convenient way of presenting this source is to reprint the English translation of the Syriac *Paradisus Patrum* (I, 268–269) by E. Budge. This version has been referred to under (4) above and is an accurate translation of the original Greek given by Nau.

ἐρήμῳ (the desert), it seems that either reading may have arisen from the other by an easy transcriptional error. Furthermore in the Syriac version, just quoted, Sarapion died at the convent of Pachomius in the desert. On the whole the objections raised by Delehaye do not appear convincing, for he seems to be too intent to stem the tide against what he refers to as "je ne sais quel succes mondain peu compatible avec le respect de la sainteté de la morte."

"CHAPTER XXXVI. OF THE HARLOT WHOM SERAPION CONVERTED.

Abbâ Serapion once came and passed through a certain village in Egypt, and he saw a harlot standing in her cell, and the old man said unto her, 'Remain here until the evening, for I wish to come with thee, and to pass this night with thee;' and the harlot said, 'It is well, 'O father.' Then she made ready, and prepared her bed, and she awaited the old man with that which he required. Now when it was evening, Abbâ Serapion came, but he brought nothing with him, and he went into her cell, and said unto her, 'Is thy bed ready?' And she said unto him, 'Yea, 'father'; and they shut themselves in. Then the old man answered and said unto her, 'Wait a little, because I must perform a certain thing which is law unto us.' And he began to recite the Book of the Psalms of David from the beginning, and with every Psalm he offered up a prayer in her behalf, and he made supplication before God that she might repent and live, and God hearkened unto him. And the harlot stood up in fear by the side of the old man and prayed also and when Abbâ Serapion had finished all the Psalms she fell down upon the ground, and he began to repeat many verses from the (books of the) Apostles. When he had finished his service, God having opened the heart of that woman, she knew that Abbâ Serapion had not come unto her for the purpose of sin, but that he might redeem her, and she fell on her face before him, and said unto him, 'Perform an act of grace for me, O father, and take me to any place whatsoever wherein I can please God.' And he took her to an abode of nuns and placed her therein and he said to the mistress of the convent, 'Take this sister, O mother, and lay not upon her the rules and the yoke like the (other) sisters, but whatsoever she requireth that give her; and in proportion as she findeth rest let her submit to be led.' And when the woman had dwelt in the nunnery for a few days, she said, 'I am a sinful woman, and I wish to eat only in the evening;' and after a few days more she said, 'Many sins lie to my charge, and I therefore beg that I may eat once every four days,' and she did so; and after a few days more she besought the mistress of the nunnery, saying, 'Do an act of grace for me. Since I have made God exceedingly angry, take

me into a cell and wall it up, and through a small opening therein give me a little bread and work for my hands (to do)'. And the abbess of the nunnery hearkened unto her, and did thus, and in this wise that woman pleased God all the days of her life."

II

According to another story of the fifth or sixth century, an orphan whom several manuscripts call Παϊσία or Ταϊσία, [8] and whom others neglect to mention by name, established a hostelry for the Fathers of Scete and became a bankrupt in serving them. She was finally forced to become a prostitute. John Colob was delegated to try to save her soul. His lacrimose efforts and his success may be best appreciated in an English translation of the Greek manuscript edited by Nau.

CONCERNING PAISIA (OR PAISIA), THE COURTESAN.

They say that the parents of a young girl named Païsia died, and she was left behind, an orphan. She calculated on making her home an inn for the Fathers of Scete and in this way she spent a certain length of time in entertaining and serving the Fathers. After some time, when her goods were used up, she began to want. Dissolute men had attached themselves to her, and had turned her from her good purpose, and finally she began to conduct herself badly even to the point of prostituting herself.

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[8] It is noted by Nau that these two names appear to be composed of the word, Isis, preceded by a Coptic article. Ταϊσία, formed by the aid of the feminine article, appears to be more regular, according to him, as a woman's name than Παϊσία. If one should feel inclined, however, to regard Παϊσία as more correct, because out of ten of the manuscripts containing this account four have that spelling (of the rest three read Ταϊσία and three have no name at all), and that she, or a woman of similar name, was rescued by John Colob (meaning the Short), then Nau is forced to the belief that the author of the Life of Thaïs took his inspiration from the story dedicated to him and this account would still be a source.

While on the subject of the name, it would perhaps be interesting to list the various forms of the name found:

1. In Greek: Ταϊσία and by iotacism Ταησία.
2. In Latin: Taisis, Taesia, Thasis, Thaysis, Thaisis, Tahisia.
3. In Old French: Thayeis, Taisien, Thaisis, Thays, Taïs, Thaïs.
4. In fifteenth century Italian: Taide.
5. In seventeenth century Spanish: Taez.

The Fathers heard of it and were very much distressed on her account. They summoned to themselves John Colob and said to him, "We have heard that that sister is conducting herself badly; whenever she could, she showed charity toward us, and now let us also show charity toward her and come to her assistance; take the trouble, therefore, to go to her and manage with her according to the wisdom God hath granted thee."

John Colob, therefore, went to her, knocked at the door and said to the old woman, who was the doorkeeper, "Announce me to thy mistress." But she sent her back, saying, "You men from the very beginning ate up all her property and now she is a beggar." The old man said to her, "Announce me, for I have something in which I can be of great assistance to her." Her servants smilingly said to him, "What is it, pray, thou hast to give her, that thou desirest to meet her."

The doorkeeper then went back and spoke to her concerning him, and the young girl said to her, "These monks are always travelling along the Red Sea and finding pearls of great value." She decked herself out, therefore, and said to her, "Call him."

When he came in, she went before him and sat down on the bed. Father John went near her, and, fixing his eyes on her countenance, said to her, "Why dost thou condemn Jesus that thou hast come to this." Upon hearing (these words), she was chilled, and the old man, lowering his head, began to weep violently. Then she said to him, "Father, why dost thou weep? He raised his head, then lowered it again, weeping, and said to her, "I see Satan playing on thy countenance, and should I not weep?" At these words she was shocked to the full and she said to him, "Is there any penitence, Father?" The old man replied, "Yes." She said to him, "Take me wherever thou wishest." And he replied to her, "Let us go," and she arose to follow him. Father John noticed that she gave no orders for her house, indeed, spoke no words at all, and he was astonished.

When they reached the desert, it was becoming rather late; he made a small pillow of sand for her, and having made the sign of the cross, said to her, "Sleep here." He also made one for himself at a small distance, and after saying the customary prayers, went to sleep. Toward midnight he awoke and he

saw a path of light, as it were, that extended from heaven to her, and he saw the angels of God carrying off her soul. He arose and went towards her, and pushed her with his foot. When he saw that she was dead, he threw himself forward on his countenance, praying to God. And he heard a voice saying, "Her penitence lasting only one hour outweighs the penitence of many who continue it over a long time, but who do not show as much fervor as she."

III

The third source, the passages from the *Life of Saint Anthony* by Saint Athanasius which testify to the relations between the former saint and Sarapion are found in the original Greek in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* t. XXVI, col. 958 and 972 and have been reprinted by Nau. An English translation of the Syriac text of the *Paradisus Patrum* has also been made by Budge (op cit I, p. 66 and p. 73). An English translation of the Greek follows:

A. On several occasions when he (Saint Anthony) was on the mountain, he saw things which were being wrought in Egypt and related them to Bishop Sarapion, when he was present and saw Anthony laboring with a vision.

B. Divide my garments, and give one leather tunic to Bishop Athanasius and the covering of this my bed which he gave to me. And to Bishop Sarapion give the other leather coat.

THE GREEK TEXTS

In his search for material on the Thaïs legends, Nau made the epoch-making discovery of a Greek text of the eleventh century in an uncatalogued manuscript at Paris, No. 1596, pp. 374 to 380 (A). This is the longest, most detailed and smoothest of all the Greek versions, and an English translation will, therefore, be of general interest.

PENITENCE OF THE BLESSED THAIS, THE COURTESAN.

True brothers and faithful servants of Christ, the King, lend me your ears a short time for a narrative, divine and useful for the soul. For I wish to relate to you the wonderful, pure and

profitable conversion which reflected completely the glory of Thaïs, the servant of Christ, who began and accomplished it. This narrative is useful and consoling for those who fall into the mire of sin and wish to be converted: it extends the hand to them and prevents them from falling into diabolical thoughts of despair.

There was at Alexandria a young girl of great beauty, Thaïs by name, who in womanly charm surpassed all those famous for their beauty. Her mother according to the flesh, being carnal, irreligious, unitiated in the fear of God, and heedless of the judgement that is destined to come, took her and placed her from early childhood in a brothel belonging to the devil, in a place of perdition, selling her beauty to those who wished to misuse it disgracefully. And the renown of her beauty spread far and wide, and many came from far away to witness it, and both the strangers and her townsmen were captivated by her beauty. And just as the stag, (says the Scripture), was shot by an arrow in the liver, so were they wounded by the dart of lust. When they saw the joyousness of her countenance and the womanliness of her whole body, they were seized with insatiable love, and the madness caused by her spell burned in them like a flame. And the men, becoming thus maddened, neglected their property and their affairs for the satisfaction of their ignoble lust. Many for her sake sold their parents' property, others did not even spare their garments, and still others learned to rob to satisfy their shameful passion; and so, having become for many a death snare and abyss, she was plunging her soul into a pit every day and also the souls of all those who approached her.

Father Sarapion, surnamed the Sindonite, on account of the cloak he always wore, and (also styled) the Apathetic on account of the excellency of his conduct, having heard about her, took pity on her and upon those being led to the abyss of death through her. He was guided by divine foresight, and, by bending all his efforts to many other women, he had rescued many men from the wrong path. And now like a wise fisherman, fortified with deceptive bait, he eagerly pursues the lamb to snatch her soul from the jaws of the devil. Putting on worldly raiment, he took a coin with him and went to her. When he arrived and saw her in all her glory, he showed a joyous counte-

nance, but his heart was filled with sadness and he invoked God in her behalf. Then he threw his coin as if he wished to sleep with her. She on her part took it and said to him, "Let us enter the bed chamber." And he replied, "Let us go in." When they had entered, he saw a high bed already prepared, toward which she immediately directed her steps and also called the servant of Christ. But he, full of confusion, kept looking in this direction and that, and asked of her, "Hast thou not another chamber besides this?" She replied, "yes." And the old man said to her, "Let us go there and we shall sleep together." She replied to him, "Why dost thou desire another? If thou art afraid because thou blushest before men, no one can see us in this place, but if thou fearest God, He who is acquainted with all secrets will see us wheresoever we may go."

On hearing these words, the old man said to her, "Thou knowest then at least that there is a God?" She replied, "Yes, I know, that a true God exists, the King of the Ages who liveth in Heaven; He commanded and they were created." The old man resumed, "Dost thou know, child, that the kingdom is prepared for the righteous and punishment for the sinful, and that after death God will repay each one according to his works?" She said to him, "I know it, without great details, for I was a very young girl when I was instructed and baptized and I was not initiated into the doctrine." The old man said to her, "If thou knowest that, why hast thou destroyed thyself and so many men? Dost thou not know that death comes suddenly at an hour when thou dost not expect it and that thou wilt depart, taking nothing of this life with thee, unless it be thy good and evil deeds? Why dost thou sin thus fearlessly? Thou dost not think that death will respect thy beauty, dost thou, or that He who made thee, will pardon thee at the judgement that is to come? That judge is no respecter of persons and will not betray justice either for flattery or for riches. Of what use is the amassing of wealth? It will not of necessity redeem thy soul."

The grace of God removed all her evil bias, and, seized by compunction, she threw herself in tears at his feet and said, "I know that there is a penitence for those who have sinned, but I over-stepped the limit of penitence by the sins that have

come upon me. If there is still hope of safety for me, lead me by the hand, like a good father; I shall do whatever thou shalt command, because thou art a good angel whom God hath sent me." The old man said to her, "Come follow me, do as I say and God will have pity on thy soul and will snatch thee from evil." The Blessed (One) agreed, therefore, to follow him and to do his bidding. She then thought about her property, as though it were not worthy to be put to use and to bear fruit, and she said to him, "Grant me, master, three hours, in order that I may go and dispose of my property sinfully acquired, and then do with me as thou shalt wish." He set a place where he would wait for her and withdrew. She went to gather all her property of great value and burned it in the middle of the city, saying, "Come ye all, who have sinned with me, to see burning now under your very eyes my property acquired through sin, for I hope that my Lord, Christ, will likewise destroy my sins by his divine fire, and will purify my soul." The weight of the gold that she burned was two hundred pounds. Those who saw her, said that she had gone mad and were distressed on her account.

When she had finished that, she immediately ran to the man. He, on seeing her, received her with joy, and taking her by the hand, conducted her to a monastery of pious women. He sought out a small cell completely dark and shut her up in it; he nailed the door and sealed it with lead, leaving only a small hole through which she might receive nourishment. And the old man ordered the mother of the monastery to pray for her and to give her every day a half pound loaf of dry bread and a cup of water. The Blessed (One) said to him through the door, "Master, my Father, where shall I attend to my bodily functions, for the cell is closed on all sides?" The old man said to her, "Attend to thy bodily functions in the cell; thou hast enjoyed perfumes and aromatics, endure also ill-smelling odors, in order that good may come to thee from them." She spoke to him again, "How dost thou order me to pray, for I fear that I am unworthy of it." He replied to her, "I know also that thou art unworthy of invoking the name of the Lord or of lifting up thy hands to entreat him, for thy lips are befouled and thy hands are impure, wherefore sit thou in silence turned toward the east and say only in thy heart, '*Thou who hast created me.*

have pity on me. I have sinned, be Thou propitious toward me'." Then, after having offered prayer and commended her to the Lord, he departed.

The Blessed (One) spent three years in that dark cell as in a tomb; she endured much austerity and suffering and held out against many temptations of all kinds sent up by the enemy of good, who always envies the safety of mankind. But the divine grace looked after her: she came off victorious and trampled under foot all the machinations of the devil, as we learned finally from the abbess of the monastery[9].

Then Father Sarapion, struck with pity, went up to the blessed Anthony to learn from him if God had forgiven her or what her situation was. Having reached him, he related everything concerning her. Straightway the illustrious Anthony called his disciples together and said to them, "Let each one of you shut himself up in his cell during the whole night and pray assiduously; perhaps you will have a revelation and God will disclose the object of Father Sarapion's coming." They did as the Father had bidden them, and after the passage of many hours Father Paul, the greatest of the old man's disciples, redoubled his efforts and saw a bed, made up, gorgeous, shining like gold, and three maidens carrying lamps near the bed which they were guarding, and an immortal crown adorned with pearls and gold. And (he saw) the bed decked out. On perceiving this, he said, "The splendor of this couch and this crown belongs to none other than to Abbâ Anthony, my spiritual father," And a voice came to him, "Those things that thou hast seen belong not to Abbâ Anthony, thy father, but to Thaïs, the courtesan. When morning came, he related the vision to the rest, who on hearing it rejoiced and praised God who loves mankind.

The illustrious Sarapion, returning in great joyfulness of spirit, entered the monastery for virgins, and greeting Thaïs with a spiritual kiss and then opening the door, wished her to emerge, but she on hearing (this news), implored him saying, "Let me O father, remain in this cell until my death, for my sins are many, God will perhaps see my humility and forgive all my sins." The old man said to her, "Be of good cheer, for God, who loves

[9] This last clause was not written contemporaneously, but is an intentional anachronism to secure vividness of style.

mankind, has already taken pity on thee and received thy penitence favorably; come out and live among the virgins." She obeyed him, came out of her cell and said to the old man, "Believe me, O holy father, thy holy prayers strengthened me and guarded me, for I brought to my memory all the sins I had committed and they became a heavy burden to me; they spoke and sang in my heart what I heard, and my sores smelled and became putrid before my folly, exactly like a verse that I was saying to myself. And the devil brought me to despair but I kept before me the compassion of God and did not yield to this insinuation. Pray for me, in order that I may again ward off his treachery."

Her body was exhausted and wasted away by asceticism and austerity, so that the joints of her bones had become visible and her beauty had been marred to such an extent, that by looking at her one could not recognize whether she was the same who had enjoyed such beauty. In her case the word (of the Scripture) was in truth fulfilled, "Where there aboundeth iniquity, there superaboundeth grace." For in the degree she had surpassed, by reason of her bodily beauty, many women in defilement, so she now outstripped many of the blessed in beauty of soul; she had adorned her soul with noble deeds. For in the degree her external shell changed, so her internal soul was rejuvenated and made bright from day to day, and in the case of this blessed woman, the divine word to the Pharisees was fulfilled: "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."

The blessed Sarapion said to her, "I know well and I am persuaded that God has forgiven thy sins not only because of thy bodily privations and asceticism but also because of thy excellent spirit of humility, for *God will not despise a contrite and humble heart*, but will receive it like an agreeable offering. Out of His love for mankind, therefore, not only will He pardon thy sins, but He will prepare a heritage for thee with all the saints."

After leaving the cell, she spent fifteen days among the virgins and was ill three more days; then she expired. She went to rest serenely in the Lord and she was borne in procession by saintly and religious men by the grace and the love of Him who wishes to see all mankind saved and to arrive

at the knowledge of the truth of our Lord, Jesus Christ, to whom let there be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen.

Nau has also brought together six other Greek manuscripts found in various cities of Europe and Palestine, as follows:

(1) and (2). Two from the Vatican transcribed under the direction of Abbé Desnoyers through the intermediary of M. Vigoroux.

a. Vatican *Ottobianus* No. 1 fol. 312–314 (o) of the eleventh or twelfth century.

b. Vatican *Palatinus* No. 364, fol. 145–148 (P) of the fifteenth century.

(3) A Berlin Ms., Qu. 22, fol. 61–64 (Q) of the fifteenth century.

(4). The Jerusalem Ms., 307, fol. 70–75 (J), of the year 1799, obtained in copy from the librarian of the Greek Patriarchate of Jerusalem, Cléophas Korkylidés, through the intermediary of a certain R. P. Lagrange.

(5). The London Ms., Harl. 5639, fol. 95–97 (H), of the fifteenth century.

(6). The Oxford Ms., Laud. 84, fol. 227 (Ox.) of the twelfth century.

The last two Nau himself transcribed.

The first five manuscripts belong to the same family, but present two different redactions, the shorter (O, H) and the other, a little more developed (P, Q, J).[10] All five of these manuscripts seem to be derived from the same archetype. The uncatalogued Ms.A, which is the oldest, as well as the Oxford Ms. Ox, seem to be a paraphrase of the redaction P, Q.

All these redactions tell in fundamental details the story of Sarapion, who converted a harlot. In P, Q and J the name, Sarapion, occurs and in A, Ox, H and O he is called the Sindonite. All have the name of Thaïs, and all with the exception of P add a short prologue. They make the story dramatic by describing her beauty and success, dwelling on the dialogue preceding her conversion and the rigors of her penitence with good effect.

[10] According to Nau the redaction P, Q is undoubtedly found also in Vienna in the Ms. XXXII, fol. 18–20, which has an identical *incipit*.

A fragment of O, to judge from the *incipit*, is also found in Munich in the Ms. CCCXVIII.

They also contain the episode of Sarapion's consultation with Saint Anthony, to find out whether Thaïs' sins had been forgiven. A comparison of these manuscripts may be made conveniently by consulting the collations of these Greek texts arranged in parallel columns in the appendix to Nau's study.

THE LATIN VERSIONS.
GROUP A.

(1). The most famous and most generally used of all these versions was published by Rosweyd in the *Vitae Patrum* and has been reproduced in the *Acta Sanctirum* (Oct. IV, p. 225) and in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (t. LXXIII, col. 661–664). It has also been reprinted by Nau and by W Cloetta in his article on the *Poème Moral* in *Romanische Forschungen*, Bd. III (242–243). Translated into English it reads:

LIFE OF SAINT THAIS, THE COURTESAN, BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR.

There was a certain courtesan, Thaïs by name, of such beauty, that many, selling their substance for her sake, arrived at extreme poverty: but even brawls, with the girl's lovers engaged in hand to-hand fighting among themselves, frequently stained her threshold with blood. When Abbot Paphnutius heard of this, he put on a worldly habit, and taking a coin, went to her in a certain city of Egypt, and he gave her a coin as a reward for her transgression. But she, having accepted the money, said, "Let us go into the house;" then, when he had entered, she invited him to ascend a couch covered with costly drapery, and he said, "If there is a bed chamber further inside, let us go there." She replied, "To be sure there is one, but if thou fearest men, no one comes into this outer chamber; but if indeed thou fearest God, there is no place which may be concealed from the eyes of this Divinity." When the old man heard this, he said to her, "And thou knowest that there is a God?" To which she replied, "I know both that there is a God and that there is a Future Kingdom, and in fact, too, that tortures for sins are to follow." (Thereupon) he said, "If thou knowest these things, therefore, why hast thou ruined so many souls, so that thou wilt be condemned in rendering

account not only for thy own, but also for their crimes." When Thaïs heard this, she threw herself at the feet of the monk Paphnutius and besought him with tears, saying, "Impose penance, father; for I trust that remission (of my sins) will be my lot if thou prayest for it; I ask only three hours' grace, and after that, I shall come, wherever thou shalt order me, and I shall do whatever thou wilt enjoin." When Abbot Paphnutius had set the place, whither she was to come, she left, and having brought together all her property, that she had accumulated by her sin, she carried it into the middle of the city and under the eyes of the populace, she set fire to it saying, "Come, all ye, who have sinned with me, and see, how I shall burn everything you brought me." The value, moreover, was forty pounds.

When she had burned all these things, she proceeded to the place, which the Abbot set for her. He, when a monastery for virgins was found, led her into a cell and sealed the door of of the cell with lead, leaving a small window, through which a small measure of provisions might be handed, and he gave orders that a little bread and a little water be furnished her every day by the sisters of the monastery. But when he was on the point of leaving, after the door had already been sealed with lead, Thaïs said to him, "Where, father, dost thou order me to pass my water?" And he replied, "In the cell, as thou deservest." When, moreover, she inquired how she should pray to God, he said to her, "Thou art not worthy of mentioning God, nor of bringing the name of his Divinity upon thy lips, nor of stretching out thy hands toward Heaven, since thy lips are full of iniquity and thy hands are befouled by filth, but merely sit looking toward the east, frequently repeating only this utterance, "Thou who hast created me, have pity on me."[11]

When, therefore, she had been imprisoned in this way for three years, Abbot Paphuntius took pity on her, and soon afterward he set out to Abbot Anthony in order that he might inquire of him, whether the Lord had forgiven her her sins or not. When he arrived, therefore, and had told him in great detail of this very important case, Abbot Anthony, having called his disciples together, ordered them all to keep awake that night and to continue, one and all, steadfastly in prayer, so that God

[11] Qui plasmasti me, miserere mei.

might declare his decision, for which Abbot Paphnutius had come, to some one of them. And so when they had separated from one another and were praying incessantly, Abbot Paul the senior disciple of Saint Anthony, saw suddenly in the sky a bed covered with costly draperies over which three refulgent maidens with bright countenances were watching. When, therefore, Paul himself said, "This splendor belongs to none other than to my father Anthony", a voice came to him, "It does not belong to thy father Anthony, but to Thaïs, the courtesan."

When early in the morning Abbot Paul had told his story, Paphnutius on recognizing the will of God, departed, and having gone back to the monastery, in which she had been imprisoned, he broke open the door which he had locked; but she begged that she might remain imprisoned thus. When he had really opened the door, he said to her, "Come out, as God has forgiven thee thy sins." She replied, "I call God to witness that ever since I entered here, I placed all my sins in a heap before my eyes, and my sins did not depart from before my eyes, but I wept continually as I saw them." To her Abbot Papnutius said, "Not on account of thy penitence has God forgiven thee, but because thou always hadst the thought of them in thy mind." And when he had led her out of there, Thaïs lived only fifteen days, and thus she went to rest in peace.

Strange as it may seem this version, which, according to the prologue that will be discussed next, is a direct translation from the Greek texts, differs more than any other of the Latin versions from them. One must suppose that it is an adaptation or the translation of an adaptation, which had the purpose of making the Life of Thaïs fit in the same frame with the Lives of the Fathers. Rosweyd in his edition of the *Vitae Patrum* (cf. *Rosweydi Notatio* reprinted in Migne, P. L. LXXIII) remarks that in certain manuscripts it is placed in one book and in others, in another book. To cite one example, it occurs, for instance in Book II, chapter 16, in the account of Paphnutius who converted her. Rosweyd printed the story separately in order that Thaïs might appear among the women saints.

(2). In a catalogue of the hagiographic Latin codices of the Ambrosian library of Milan made by the Bollandists and published in the *Analecta Bollandiana* Tomus XI (Brussels 1892),

the same Latin version is found, listed as No. 7 in a parchment codex of 159 leaves. What distinguishes this account of the *Paenitentia sanctae Taysis* (fol. 118^{r}–119^{r}) is the rather lengthy prologue published for the first time on pages of 298 and 299 of the above periodical. The Latin translator is mentioned as Dionysius and the work was done for a brother Pastor and abbot. A translation of this prologue follows:

Dionysius to my very dear master (and) brother Pastor, the abbot.

Thou hast bidden me to translate from Greek the wonderful penitence of Saint Thaïs, once a courtesan, written in simple language, which Egypt, teeming in virtues, has produced among various persons of distinguished eloquence (and now) in the case of another. Thou wilt, therefore, select this conversion of sinners as a lofty symbol. For who, though bound down by the many and heavy chains of his sins, will not be stimulated by the example of this venerable woman not to despair of the relief of his own absolution? Nor should we be frightened by the arduous and difficult nature of her atonement, who, having suffered herself voluntarily to be shut up in a cell, escaped eternal torment by the punishment of a short time. For He is powerful, merciful and omnipotent, so that He, who conferred the reward upon her for such patience, will bestow his affection upon us for our penitence, in order that we, by abstaining from fatal sins, may derive advantage by his daily indulgence, through which we may obtain the pity of our Lord, who through his prophet attested and said, "I do not wish the death of the sinner but that he should be converted and live." Pray for me, venerable brother.

Here begins the deed or penitence of the same (woman). She opens the possibility of human deliverance and access to the eternal King to penitents. And if each one of these, whosoever he may be, should be oppressed by the bondage of his misdeeds and should be converted deep down from the bottom of his heart, he will easily win pardon for his sins. For it is written, "Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted." And elsewhere, "There is more (rejoicing) in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

(3). In the *Acta Sanctorum* (Oct. IV. p. 225) some variants of a manuscript (P18) are given. This manuscript appears to Nau to be analagous, if not identical, to a Paris manuscript 10840, fol. 143–145 (l).

(4). Nau also discovered in Paris an unedited Latin version 1773, fol. 33–34 (L). This seems to be a translation, sometimes a little free, of a Greek manuscript of the family O, P, Q (it resembles O most nearly), with several additions and glosses which may have been borrowed from another Latin manuscript, if not by the translator, then at least by the corrector. It is also remarkable that the variants of the Ms. P 18 of the Bollandists and of the Paris Ms. 10840 are found in this version.

GROUP B.

Nau has also collated three other Latin manuscripts found at Paris.

(5). No. 2464, fol. 188–189 of the thirteenth century (identical with Ms. 2462, fol. 207–208 of the thirteenth century also).

(6) No. 2867, fol. 54–56 of the fourteenth century.

(7) N. A. 1491, pp. 804–806 of the eleventh century. This Ms. also has the part of the prologue of the Milan parchment (2) beginning, "Salutis humani aeterni regis aditum" etc.

The three manuscripts in this group differ less than (3) and (4) from the Rosweyd text, without, however, being identical. In addition they have particulars in common with 1773 and 10840.

GROUP C.

Nau also found some other accounts of the Life of Thaïs, as follows:

(8). A Paris Ms No. 2768 A, fol 21 v.

(9). Another Paris Ms. No. 5386, fol. 131 v.

(10). A third Paris Ms. No. 5624, fol. 41^{r}.

(11). In the Bodleian Library at Oxford, Canon misc. 395, fol. 108 v.

(12). In the British Museum, add 33518, fol. 47.

(13). Also in the British Museum, Bibl. Reg., 9, A, XIV, fol. 280.

The first five in this group resemble (3), sometimes also (1). The last, which belongs to the fourteenth century, seems to give only a résumé of the story. It begins with the words,

"Inter vitas Patrum legitur de Thayde, vilissima muliere . . . ." but then fails to mention the name of the hermit. At the end of three years, he does not go to consult Saint Anthony, but is transported to heaven, where he learns of the forgiveness of Thaïs' sins himself.

Nau makes no attempt to classify these various manuscripts, all of which differ more or less from each other, for he feels that such a classification would be too incomplete and consequently too imperfect. He limits himself to making a few generalities on the subject.

If one notices that the redactions that resemble Rosweyd most nearly are inserted in the *Vitae Patrum*[12] then one is led to an hypothesis which will explain to us some peculiarities of the manuscripts and also the introduction of the name of Paphnutius in the place of Sarapion. The translator of the *Vitae Patrum*, who in the case of this legend may have been the Dionysius mentioned above, translated a Greek résumé of the Life of Thaïs. His work is represented by Mss. (5), (6) and (7) etc. and with various modifications by Rosweyd's edition. At about the same time, or perhaps a little later, the Greek Life, from which (4) is derived, was translated more faithfully. Finally a combination of the two versions produced the Mss. of the type (3), which offer passages common to both.

Besides the *Vitae Patrum* are most of the time *Apophthegmata*. Their translator had also, therefore, under his eyes the passage which tells of the conversion by Sarapion of a courtesan *whose name is not given*. He then found the conversion of Thaïs by Sarapion, and as he did not wish either to identify the two courtesans, or to attribute two conversions to Sarapion, he attributed the second to Paphnutius. Subsequent translators inserted in their translations the traditional name. This method of explaining the substitution is the only acceptable one, for no other plausible reason can be thought of.

Under the Greek texts in the appendix, Nau has printed in parallel columns, for the sake of comparison, three Latin texts, namely Rosweyd's (R), 1773 (L) and 10840 (l). Those pass-

[12] Properly speaking, these are not Lives of the Fathers of the Desert; they are often translations of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*. Nau frequently found in unedited Greek manuscripts many accounts of the *Vitae Patrum* translated later into French verse.

ages of Ms. l which are common to Rosweyd's text and are not found in this manner in L are printed in italics. It is impossible to explain the relation existing between the three texts without supposing that l is a combination of the other two, i. e. a sort of critical edition.

An interesting résumé of 71 words in corrupt Latin of the Thaïs story has been communicated to Nau by von Dobschütz, Professor of Theology at Jena. It was found in a Cambridge manuscript, Corpus Christi, 385, p. 239, and belongs to the fifteenth century. It tells us only that Paphnutius on being admitted into a very retired place, asked whether it was sheltered from everyone's sight. On being told that secrecy from God was impossible, he asked her whether she did not therefore blush for her actions. Overcome with confusion, Thaïs fell at his feet, and craving pardon, started on her penitence.

LEGENDA AUREA.

The account of the Latin versions would by no means be complete without discussing the version of Jacobus de Voragine (di Viraggio), most familiarly known as Jacques de Voragine, the Blessed, Archbishop of Genoa and medieval hagiologist (1228–1298). It is contained in a collection of legendary lives of saints, which was entitled *Legenda Sanctorum* by the author, but soon became universally known as *Legenda Aurea* because the people considered it worth its weight in gold. It was not the object of Jacopo de Voragine to compose reliable biographies or to write scientific treatises for the learned, but it was essentially an attempt to popularize and "laïcize" the religious knowledge which had been accumulating in monastic libraries for many centuries. The attempt was a complete success.

The legend of Thaïs, like many others, was drawn from the *Vitae Patrum* and was written about 1260. The Latin is more polished and the narrative is more skilfully told than in the Rosweyd version. It also has added at the close an account of Ephrem's successful resistance to the wiles of another courtesan, whom he was trying to convert. A translation of the Latin text as edited by Th. Graesse in his edition of the *Legenda Aurea* (pp. 677–679) (Leipzig 1846) follows:

CONCERNING SAINT THAIS, THE COURTESAN.

As it is read in the Lives of the Fathers. Thaïs was of such great beauty that many men, having sold their property for her sake, came to extreme poverty, but her lovers out of jealousy frequently besprinkled her door-sill with blood in their hand-to-hand encounters. When Abbot Paphnutius heard this, he procured a secular garb and a coin, and set out to her in a certain city in Egypt and gave her the coin, as though in payment for sinning with her. She, receiving the money, said to him, "Let us go into my room," and when he had entered and was invited to ascend a bed spread with costly draperies, he said to her, "If there is a bedchamber further inside, let us go into that." And when she had conducted him through several places, he always kept on remarking that he was afraid of being seen. But she said, "There is a certain bedchamber where no one comes in, but if thou hast fear of God, there is no place which may be kept secret from the Deity." When the old man heard this, he said to her, "And dost thou know that there is a God?" When she had replied that she knew that there was a God and a kingdom for a life to come and in fact also torture for sinners, he said to her, "If thou knowest this, then why hast thou destroyed so many souls? Not only for thy own soul, but also for theirs, wilt thou be condemned to render account." On hearing these words she prostrated herself at the feet of Abbot Paphnutius and implored him with tears, saying, "I know that there is a penitence, and I am confident that by thy prayer remission of sins will fall to my lot; I only ask three hours' delay and after that I will go, wherever thou wilt bid me, and I will do whatever thou wilt command." And after the Abbot had set the place, whither she was to come, she collected all her property which she had received as reward for sin, brought it from the center of the city and set fire to it as the people looked on, shouting, "Come all ye who have sinned with me, and see how I shall burn what you bestowed upon me." The value amounted to four hundred pounds of gold. Then, when she had burned everything, she proceeded to the place which Abbot Paphnutius had set. He, after finding a monastery for virgins, shut her up in a small cell and sealed the door of the cell with lead, and he left a small window, through which a mod-

erate quantity of nourishment might be introduced, and he gave orders that she be served every day by the rest with a small quantity of bread and a little water. But when the old man was on the point of leaving, Thaïs said to him, "Where, O father, dost thou order me to pass my water?" And he replied, "In the cell, as thou deservest." And when she again asked him how she should pray to God, he replied, "Thou art unworthy to mention the name of God, or to bring the name of the Trinity upon thy lips, or even to stretch thy hands toward heaven, inasmuch as thy lips are full of iniquity and thy hands are sullied with impurity; but falling down on thy knees, only gaze toward the east, often repeating this utterance, "Thou who has created me, have pity on me." When, therefore, she had been shut up for three years, Abbot Paphnutius took pity on her and set out to Abbot Anthony, that he might inquire of him, if God had forgiven her her sins. And, when the case had been stated, Saint Anthony called his disciples together and enjoined that each one should keep awake that night and remain in prayer until God might reveal to some one of them the reason, for which Paphnutius had come. When, therefore, they had prayed unceasingly, Abbot Paul, the senior disciple of Anthony, suddenly saw in the sky a bed adorned with costly drapery, which three virgins with shining countenances were guarding. Those three virgins were: Fear of Future Punishment, who drew her away from evil; Shame for Sins Committed, who won pardon for her; and Love of Justice, who transported her to the regions above. And when Paul said to them that this great honor belonged to Anthony, a divine voice replied, "It does not belong to thy father Anthony, but to Thaïs, the harlot." When Abbot Paul reported this in the morning, Abbot Paphuntius, recognizing the will of God, departed with joy, and soon afterward he set out for the monastery and opened the door. But she asked him to let her stay imprisoned as hitherto. He said to her, however, "Come out, since God has forgiven thee thy sins." And she replied, "I call God to witness, that ever since I entered here, I made a heap, as it were, of all my sins and placed them before my eyes, and just as the stench did not leave my nostrils, so my sins did not depart from before my eyes, but I wept always reflecting upon them." To her Abbot Paphnutius said, "Not on account of thy penitence has

God forgiven thee thy sins, but because thou always hadst fear in thy soul." And when he had led her out of there, she lived fifteen days more and went to rest in peace. Abbot Ephrem, also, wished to convert a courtesan in truly the same manner. For when the courtesan was drawing Saint Ephrem on to sin with her, Ephrem said to her, "Follow me!" When, on following him, she had come to a certain place, where there was a multitude of men, he said to her, "Lie down here, in order that I may have intercourse with thee." And she (replied), "How can I do that here with so great a multitude standing about?" And he (said), "If thou blushest before men, oughtest thou not blush all the more before thy Creator, who penetrates even the deepest of the shadows?" In reply she retreated in confusion.

THE GREEK MENOLOGIES

The author of the Greek menologies, as the saints' calenders are called, had under his eyes a Greek life analagous perhaps to A, the account translated into English above, to judge from an expression found only in this version and in the first menology translated below (of ἐργαστήριον κατέστη τοῦ διαβόλου). He saw the reading Σαραπίων ὁ Σινδόνιος and to be in agreement with the Latin Lives, he wrote the nonsensical Παφνουτίου τοῦ Σινδωνίου, and further on λιτρῶν τετρακοσίων (four hundred pounds), for the Latin texts as well as the Latin menologies have that weight, or else forty pounds through a copyist's mistake. The Greek texts have two hundred pounds (A) and six hundred pounds (P, Q).

The following is a translation of two Greek menologies collated by Nau. The first occurs under the date of October 8 and is to be found in Mss. 1590 and 1592, copied in 1063.

ALSO THE ANNIVERSARY OF THAIS, THE COURTESAN.

From childhood she was placed by her own mother in a brothel of the devil. Sought out by Paphnutius, the Sindonite, and receiving the assurance that there was a penitence, she burned all her property weighing four hundred pounds in the fire and shut herself in a cell. Shedding tears and often sighing from the bottom of her heart, she said, "Thou who hast created me, have

mercy on me." In this way she spent three years; then, having come out at the order of the father, she died fifteen days later.

The second of these menologies is also found under the date of October 8 in Ms. 1580 of the twelfth century, and likewise in Ms. 1589.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOLY THAIS, ONCE A COURTESAN.

In early girlhood she was placed in a brothel of the devil; but she was sought out and came to repentance through Paphnutius the Si[n]donite. Thereupon, having apportioned all her property to beggars and being shut up in a narrow cell, she moved God to mercy by her tears and sighs. After being engaged three years in penance, she died in her cell.

The Latin translations of two other Greek menologies are found in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* appended to the Rosweyd version of the legend and under the heading *Rosweydi Notatio*. Noteworthy is the fact that Rosweyd thought that the corrupt Σιδώνιος indicated the country of Paphnutius. Interesting also is the last sentence in the translation of the second menology, "Claruit anno salutis 344" (She became renowned in the year of salvation 344).

THE SYRIAC VERSION.

In the middle of the seventh century, Anan-Isho, a monk of the great Nestorian monastery of Beth Abhe in Mesopotamia, made a collection of the current Syriac *Apophthegmata*, or Sayings and Anecdotes of the leading Egyptian monks, and incorporated this in a larger collection called the *Paradisus Patrum*. Butler in his book already cited (I, p. 81) especially mentions the Syriac translation of "The blessed woman Tehesia" as one of the additions by Anan-Isho. This life is found in manuscripts kept at Paris, London and Rome, and R. P. Bedjan has published these various manuscripts in his *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, t. VII, (Paris 1897), pp. 105–109. Although Nau discovered some other Syriac manuscripts at Paris, these were found to be identical with those already known. This version was later translated into Arabic and is also found in *Carchouni* (i. e. Arabic written in Syriac characters)

at London in the Ms. No. 258, fol. 198–201, of the fifteenth century. Nau has translated the Syriac into French under the Greek texts, and a very excellent English translation has been made by Budge in the *The Paradise* or *Garden of the Holy Fathers*, I pp. 140–142:

"CHAPTER XXX OF THE BLESSED WOMAN THAIS OR THAISIS.

And now I desire to narrate unto you the excellent history and the great repentance of the blessed woman Thais or Thaisis, for speech concerning her is most excellent, and is full of encouragement and penitence of soul unto those who love God. Now this woman had a mother who, because her daughter was beautiful of face, made her to take up a position in the market; and the rumour of her beauty travelled unto every place, and those who were living afar off desired greatly to see her; and no man who looked upon her was satisfied with the sight of her face, because she burned like a flame of fire into the hearts of those who saw her; and many by reason of their mad love for her sold whatever property they had to her parents that they might have commerce with her. Now when Bessarion, the servant of God, heard these things concerning this woman and that through her beauty she was dragging many to destruction, he arrayed himself in the apparel of a man who was in the world, and took with him one *dînâr* and went unto her, and when he saw her he brought forth the *dînâr* and gave it to her; and having taken the *dînâr* she said unto him, 'Let us go into a room,' and he said unto her, 'Yea, let us go in.' And having gone in, the blessed man Bessarion saw the couch which was laid out. Now it was a very high one, and the woman said unto the old man, 'Come, get up on this bed;' and he said unto her, 'Hast thou not inside this chamber another room?' and she said unto him, 'Yea.' Then he said unto her, 'Let us then go in there.' And Thais answered and said unto him, 'If it be that thou art ashamed of men (seeing thee, know) that no man can see (us) in this chamber; but if it be God of Whom thou art afraid, He can see us in whatsoever place we enter.' And the blessed man Bessarion hearing these words, said unto her, 'My daughter, dost thou know that God existeth?' And

she said unto him, 'Yea, I know that God existeth, and (that there will be) kingdom, and judgment.' Then the old man said unto her, 'If thou knowest that God is, and (that there will be) kingdom and judgment, why dost thou destroy men in this manner?' And straightway the woman cast herself at his feet, and said unto him, 'I know that there is repentance for those who sin. But I beseech thee, master, to tarry with me for three hours, and whatsoever thou wishest to do unto me that do because of all the evil things which have been wrought by me;' and having told her in what place he would await her he left her and went away.

Then in that same hour the woman took everything which she had gained by fornication and burnt it with fire in the midst of the city, and she said, 'Come, O all ye who have had commerce with me, and see that I am burning before your eyes every possession which I have gathered together by means of sin;' and the things which were burned were (worth) three hundred pounds of gold, and there were there also goods and apparel of all kinds; and after she had burned up everything she went to the blessed man Bessarion. And when Bessarion saw her he took her by her hand and led her along and brought her to a religious house of sisters, and he shut her in a little cell, leaving only one small window in the wall through which a woman passed in food to her. And the blessed Bessarion said unto the head of the house, 'Give her a pound of dry bread each day, and water according to her need.' Then the blessed woman Thaïs said unto the venerable Bessarion, 'With what petition dost thou command me to pray unto God? That He should forgive me my sins?' The blessed Bessarion said unto her, 'Thou art neither worthy to pray unto God, nor to make mention of His Name with thy lips, nor to stretch out thy hands unto Him; for thy lips are unclean and polluted, and thy hands are contaminated with impurity; thou shalt only sit down and gaze towards the East, and thou shalt say nothing except, 'O Thou who didst create me, have mercy upon me.' And having dwelt in that cell for a space of about three years, the blessed Bessarion had mercy upon her, and the blessed man went to Abbâ Anthony that he might learn from him whether God had forgiven her her sins or not. Then having spoken concerning her unto Anthony, that blessed man called unto his dis-

ciples, and said unto them, 'Let each one of you shut himself in (his) cell all night, and pray ye unto God that we may see unto whom shall be revealed the matter concerning which the blessed Bessarion has come unto us (this day).

And when they all had done as they had been commanded and when a long time had elapsed, the blessed Paul, the chief of the disciples of Mâr Anthony, looked into the heavens and saw three angels who were carrying three lamps were standing before that couch, and a crown of glory was laid thereupon. And having seen all this glorious sight he said 'This couch can only be for my father Anthony?' Then a voice came unto him from heaven, saying, 'This couch is not for Anthony, thy father, but for Thais the harlot;' and the blessed Paul rose up early in the morning and related the vision which he had seen. And the blessed Mâr Bessarion came back from Abbâ Anthony in great joy, and he went to the religious house of the sisterhood, and he opened the door that he might bring the woman out from the cell wherein she was secluded; but she made entreaty unto him saying, 'Leave me here until my death, for my sins are many.' Then the blessed man said unto her, 'Behold the merciful God hath had compassion upon thee, and hath accepted thy repentance;' and then she wished to go forth from her cell. And she answered and said unto him, 'Believe me, O Father, from the day whereon I entered this cell I have made all my sins a mighty burden and I have set it before my eyes, in such wise that as the breath of my nostrils hath not separated itself from me, so my sins have not separated themselves from me until this hour.'

And the blessed Bessarion answered and said unto her, 'God hath not forgiven thee thy sins because of thy repentance, but because of the thought which thou hadst—that thou wouldst deliver thyself over to Christ.' Now this blessed woman Thaïs lived (literally, made) after her repentance fifteen days, and she departed unto our Lord in peace. Thus was the crowning of the blessed Thais, who was lost and found, and was dead and who came to life by the grace of Christ, unto Whom belong mercy, and compassion, and glory, and honour, for ever ever. Amen."

This version is certainly derived from the Greek texts, as Nau goes on to prove. It offers, as has already been mentioned, the peculiarity of replacing the name of Sarapion, the Sindonite, by Bessarion. The same change is to be found in the Arabic version. The case is made stronger by the discovery that Nau has made, of inverse substitutions.

1. In Chapter CXVI of the *Historia Lausiaca* in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, t. XXXIV, a chapter which has been dropped in Butler's and Lucot's texts, it is related that Bessarion wore only a tunic, a small mantel and carried the Gospel: he covered a corpse with his mantel, gave his tunic to a poor man and sold the Gospel to give away its price. The same story is attributed to Sarapion, the Sindonite, in the life of John, the Almoner (Migne, *P. L.* t. LXXIII, col. 359), and the sale of the Gospel is again attributed to Sarapion by Rufinus (ibid., col 772–773). The latter is also cited without any proper name in a story of Evagrius by Socrates (*Hist. eccl.* IV, 23) and by Pelagius (P. L, t. LXXIII, col. 889).

2. In like manner, two Greek manuscripts mentioned by Nau (2474, fol. 167, and 1036, fol. 275) tell that Sarapion lived like the birds of the sky, free from care; the Syriac (*Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, t. VII, p. 263–264) tells the same fact regarding Bessarion. Finally a Greek manuscript (917, fol. 187) serves as a connecting link between these two readings: it had the reading Bessarion, but this name has been erased and replaced by Sarapion.

The whole matter resolves itself simply into a substitution by some transcriber or other, in order that his hero or that of the community for which he was writing, might receive additional honor. Such changes are frequently found in Egyptian traditions, as well as in those of other countries. Witness the mythical deeds attributed to various heroes in the *Nibelungenlied* or to Charlemagne in the *Chanson de Roland*. Recall also the change from Paphnutius to Athanaël for the sake of the music in Massenet's lyric comedy and still more recently the change to Damiel in a dramatic version of Anatole France's novel by P. Wilstach in 1911.

SUMMARY.

A courtesan, whose name is not known for certain, but who was undoubtedly called Ταΐσία or Οαΐας (?), i. e. Thaïs, was converted in a certain hamlet in Egypt by Sarapion, perhaps Sarapion, the Sindonite, toward the middle of the fourth century. This story was written down in Greek in the fourth or fifth Century in the form that is to be found in Nau's article, p 76 ff. This version was translated into Latin, and this text is also printed by Nau below the Greek text just mentioned. It was also translated into Syriac. This translation is preserved in a manuscript written in 532 (add. 17176) and was inserted in the seventh century into a Syriac compilation of the *Paradisus Patrum*. Dr. Budge's English translation was reprinted above, because it had the advantage of being a close translation of the Greek. This version is undoubtedly the primitive story of Thaïs.

An author of the fifth or sixth century dramatized this story and added to it a pretended visit of Sarapion to Anthony, and also undoubtedly took added inspiration from an anecdote relating to Païsia or Thaïsia and John Colob (this story has been translated above as the second of the sources) and also from an incident in the Life of Saint Anthony, which is chronicled in the account of Bishop Athanasius, also translated above. In this way the story of Thaïs in the proper sense of the word was constructed, and of this version we have two Greek redactions O, H and P, Q. J.

This story (O, H, P, Q, J.) was again paraphrased in Greek before the redactions of the Menologies, and thus gave birth to the best developed story (A, Ox.). Further, it was translated into Syriac (with the change of Sarapion to Bessarion) and was inserted in the compilation of the seventh century, of which Budge's translation has been given. The Syriac translation was in turn translated into Arabic.

Finally, it was recapitulated, probably first in Greek and then translated by a certain Dionysius, mentioned in the prologue of a manuscript found among the codices of Latin hagiographs in the Ambrosian Library of Milan. This version is most popularly represented in the *Vitae Patrum*, of which the most famous collection has been made by Rosweyd, and which has

the change of Sarapion to Paphnutius. The Greek version similar to that represented by the family O, H, P, Q, J (or rather O H) was also translated more faithfully (L), and the combination of the two translations Rosweyd and L, led to a translation I, formed evidently by a judical selection from the two preceding ones. The version in the *Legenda Aurea* followed closely on the Rosweyd version with a few interpolations, notably that of the personification of the three virgins appearing in Paul's vision and Ephrem's unsuccessful attempt to convert a courtesan.

The best developed form of the story in Greek, A, and the Latin translations were utilized by the authors of the Greek Menologies, translations of which have been given above.[13]

[13] H. Delehaye in his review in the *Analecta Bollandiana* XXIV (400–401), already mentioned, especially objects to this statement of Nau that the Latin translations were used in the preparation of the Greek Menologies, although he fails to produce any proofs to the contrary. He would retain Paphnutius as the spiritual father of Thaïs.

He also objects to a view advanced by P. Battifol in an article entitled *La légende de Sainte Thaïs* that appeared in the *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* pp. 207–217, (Toulouse 1903), that, owing to the failure of historians of any kind to mention Thaïs and on account of the legendary character of the occurence of the conversion, the story is nothing more than a *morality*. This article has not been accessible to me.

CHAPTER II.
HROTSVITHA'S "PAPHNUTIUS."

Already about three hundred years before Jacopo de Voragine in Italy gave us the most polished form of the legend in Latin, a Benedictine nun in the interior of Germany, with an almost incomprehensible appreciation of literary values, chose the Thaïs legend as the subject of one of her six so-called comedies.[14] It was the third time that Hrotsvitha had hit upon the literary use of themes that were to become still more famous, in the first instance through Goethe's *Faust* and in the second through *Romeo and Juliet*. In two of the eight legends that she wrote, namely in *Lapsus et conversio Theophili Vicedomini* and *Conversio cuiusdam juvenis desperati per S. Basilium episcopum*, the Faust motive, i. e. the gain of earthly advantages in exchange for the soul, was given treatment. In the former it is ambition, in the latter, love, which drives the wretched sinners into their pact with the devil. In her comedy, *Calimachus*, which, by the way, comes nearest to the modern conception of the drama, we have a prototype of the drama of passion, the frenzy of the soul and senses, which reached the acme of its development in *Romeo* and *Juliet*. Magnin and others following in his wake have seen unmistakable points of resemblance in the words of the dialogue of this second of Hrotsvitha's plays and Shakespeare's tragedy and also in the sepulchral scenes of both dramas. However, accidental as these similarities may actually be, the choice of this theme again exhibits Hrotsvitha's uncanny perspicacity in using themes of lasting interest.

For the third time Hrotsvitha selected a subject throbbing with human interest of an immortal nature, when she exploited a Latin translation of a Greek legend and by subtle touches in sentiment and dialogue converted it into her masterpiece

[14] Hrotsvitha herself did not call her dramas comedies. This term was probably applied as the result of one of the headings of Conrad Celtes, the first editor, and was used in the sense of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. In a letter to Can Grande, Dante defines comedy as, "A poetic tale beginning in horrors and ending in joy, and using lowly language, while tragedy commences tranquilly and ends in horror and uses lofty language."

Abraham or *Lapsus et conversio Mariae, neptis Abrahae eremitae.* The motive of the conversion of a courtesan has always been a favorite among the early Christians, but never had it been so delicately, though by no means prudishly, treated. In more recent literature, Erasmus in his *Colloquies* in a scene half jocular and half moral entitled *Adolescens et scortum* and the Elizabethan poet and dramatist, Dekker, in *The Honest Whore* made use of the same motive, but with far less restraint. Hrotsvitha realized that she had again found a subject of universal appeal and her next comedy treated a variation of the same theme, which, though lacking in the greatness of its predecessor, has become more famous on account of the still more brilliant treatment of the same legend during the past generation. But the early discernment of the possibilities of these three themes cannot be sufficiently marvelled at.

Here was a nun, who between the years cir. 950 and 968, right in the midst of the so-called "leaden century," with the perversity of her sex flatly contradicted all generally accepted notions of the period and produced literary gems at a time when most of Western Europe was struggling to prevent the total extinction of the torch of occidental civilization. England was trying to conciliate the Danes by paying tribute; France likewise was suffering from the invasion of the Norsemen; Spain was in the hands of the Saracen who had also occupied the Holy Land; and Italy and Rome were in the throes of internal dissensions. The condition in Germany, however, was at that time in many respects more favorable for intellectual activity. Nearly one hundred and fifty years before the generally accepted date of Hrotsvitha's birth (cir. 935 A. D.) the hitherto untamed and warlike Saxons had been finally defeated by the mercenaries of Charlemagne, and, as one of the signs of submission, forced to embrace Christianity. It was not long, however, before the conquered with a surprising aptitude, equalled in modern times only by the Japanese, assimilated the best of Frankish culture, and in about a century the supreme power was transferred from the once powerful Frankish kingdom to the Saxons under the kingship of Henry I. Some fifty years later, in 962, Otto I, surnamed the Great, after being crowned King of the Germans at Aix la Chapelle in 936, received the Imperial Crown from the Pope in Rome. This displacement of political center was

naturally followed by a complete displacement of artistic centers. Both of these sides were fostered by Otto with a keen personal interest—the building of his empire and the encouragement of art going hand in hand. Moreover, owing to his close ties with Italy and the East, and the element of classic tradition invariably induced by such ties, art received an added stimulus and grace. Learned men and artists were summoned from Italy and Constantinople. The number and influence of these were increased when the son of Otto I, afterwards Otto II (reigned 973–982), married Theophano, a Greek princess, who, bringing many compatriots in her train, sought to reflect in her German home something of the learning and splendor of the Byzantine court. It was in this so-called Ottonian Renaissance, a real oasis in the desolation of an age when people were looking forward to the end of the world, that Hrotsvitha produced her works.

It is not my purpose to go into numerous details about the life and the works of this famous nun, because they have been most thoroughly and scientifically discussed and debated, beginning with Magnin and ending with Paul von Winterfield and Karl Strecker. The date of her birth has already been given; it seems probable that she did not live long after 973. She is not to be confused with the Hrotsvitha who became the fourth abbess of Gandersheim in 903. Many fanciful interpretations were made concerning her name until Jacob Grimm cleared up the etymology of the word by settling upon the expression *clamor validus Gandeshemensis*, used in apposition to her name in the *Praefatio in Comoedias* as the translation thereof. The Old High German *hrôd* means *glory, praiseful shout*, and *swinde*, in the Old Saxon form *swîth* means *strong*. Hrotsvitha as well as *clamor validus*, therefore, means the *strong voice*. It has been established with reasonable certainty that she was descended from noble Saxon lineage, for two reasons, first because the Convent of Gandersheim admitted only girls of high degree, and secondly, because Bodo, who in the sixteenth century had access to records that have since been lost, expressly states in his *Syntagma Gandeshemensis* that she was born in Saxony.

The date of her entrance into Gandersheim is uncertain. Magnin makes her twenty-three years old but gives us no clue as to how he arrives at this supposition. Many credit her with much worldly experience on the score of her apparently first hand knowledge of the world as revealed in her works. But there is no real cause to believe otherwise than that she entered the Convent at an early date, for in no other environment could she have acquired the deep learning revealed through her writings. Gundlach has constructed her book shelf of personal reading as follows: The Bible, Apocrypha, the Church Fathers, Vergil, Sedulius, Prudentius, Terence, Horace, Lucan, Benantius Fortunatus, Boëthius; scientific works such as Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, Macrobius and Censorinus must also have been included, for definitions similar to those found in *Paphnutius* and *Sapientia* about Macrocosm and Microcosm and about Music and the Science of Numbers occur there. Several writers also assure us that Hrotsvitha was versed in Greek literature. The possibility of her coming under Greek influence has already been demonstrated and then, too, words and constructions (e. g. *aliquem nocere*) of Greek origin are scattered here and there throughout her works. Two teachers are mentioned as deserving special recognition for examples and inspiration. Rikkardis, a nun of Gandersheim, who had a high reputation for her thorough mastery of Dialectics and Rhetoric, and Gerberga, the Abbess of Gandersheim from 995 to 1002, who introduced her to Roman literature.

Dr. Gustav Schilling in his enthusiasm for Hrotsvitha (in an article in the *Universal Lexicon der Tonkunst*, Stuttgart 1834–1839) tries to rank her among the musical composers of Germany. But Hrotsvitha has enough real glory without attributing imaginary accomplishments to her.

Her works consist of:

1. Eight metrical legends.
2. Six dramas.
3. Two epic poems and some minor verses.

A synopsis of these various works can be found in most recent and authoritative form in Karl Strecker's articles in *Neue Jahrbücher*, referred to in the bibliography.

We are here primarily concerned with the *Conversio Thaidis meretricis*. This comedy, the fifth in the series, for a long time attracted, next to *Sapientia* perhaps, the least attention of all. Whereas *Gallicanus* had the honor of being included in Part I of Gottsched's *Nöthiger Vorrat*, and *Abraham* the honor of being the first to be translated into German by Adam Werner von Themar two years after its first appearance in print (1503) and of being produced on the stage on October 25, 1897 in Vienna, *Paphnutius* received no special attention until the appearance of a French translation by Charles Magnin in the *Revue des deux Mondes* of 1839. This translation with a few changes was later incorporated in his famous complete translation of the six comedies of 1845. A German translation (in *Knittelvers*) was first made by J. Bendixen in 1853, and a German prose translation was later made for the Reclam series in 1889, by Ottomar Piltz. In 1907 there appeared a second more literal translation by Coecilia Vellini. In English no attention was paid to it until the spring of 1913, when, according to a note of Miss Darley Dale in her article on *Roswitha, the Nun* (cf. bibliography), "Paphnutius was translated into English[15] and produced in the Savoy in London with Miss Ellen Terry taking a small part in it. Although I have written to the editor of the *American Catholic Quarterly Review* and to the manager of the Savoy Theatre, I have not been able to obtain any results either in the matter of getting the English translation or any details regarding the production. In 1917, selected passages were translated by Mrs. Blashfield (cf. bibliography).

My complete translation now follows.

ARGUMENT OF PAPHNUTIUS.[16]

The conversion of Thaïs, the Courtesan, whom the hermit Paphnutius, just like Abraham, converted, approaching her in the guise of a lover, and then enclosed for penitence for a period of five[17] years in a narrow cell, until reconciled with God after just expiation, she went to rest in Christ on the fifteenth day after the accomplishment of her penitence.

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[15] *Paphnutius* would thus have the distinction of being the first of Hrotsvitha's plays to be translated into English with *Dulcitius* holding second place (cf. Arthur F. McCann's translation in 1917).

[16] This was added by Conrad Celtes.

[17] Evidently a slip on the part of Conrad Celtes.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.[18]

PAPHNUTIUS, a hermit.

DISCIPLES OF PAPHNUTIUS.

THAIS, a Courtesan.

LOVERS OF THAIS.

ANTHONY and PAUL, hermits of the Thebaid.

AN ABBESS.

(ACT I)

(SCENE I)

(Before the cell of Paphnutius in the Desert.)

(PAPHNUTIUS, DISCIPLES.)

DISCIPLES. Why, O Father, this gloomy countenance and not that air of serenity, which is thy custom?

PAPHNUTIUS. Whose heart is saddened, his countenance is also darkened.

DISCIPLES. Why art thou sad?

PAPHNUTIUS. For an injury to the Creator.

DISCIPLES. What is this injury?

PAPHNUTIUS. That He suffers from his own creature, made in his image.

DISCIPLES. Thou hast terrified us by thy words.

PAPHNUTIUS. Although His impassible Majesty cannot be touched by any injuries, yet to transfer, by metaphor, to God the sense of this word belonging to our frailty: can it be said that there is any injury greater than that the minor world should be revolting against his authority, whose government the major world obeys with humility?

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[18] The listing of the characters of the comedy as well as its division into scenes was a device first employed by Magnin. Although, along with the best modern critics, I do not believe that these plays were actually performed during Hrotsvitha's age this arrangement adds materially to the illusion of its being a drama, and I have therefore adhered to the time honored custom. I have also taken the liberty of inserting a few stage directions.

DISCIPLES. What is the minor world?[19]

PAPHNUTIUS. Man.

DISCIPLES. Man?

PAPHNUTIUS. Certainly

DISCIPLES. What man?

PAPHNUTIUS. Every man.

DISCIPLES. How is that possible?

PAPHNUTIUS. Since it has pleased the Creator.

DISCIPLES. We do not understand.

PAPHNUTIUS. That is not easy for most people.

DISCIPLES. Explain.

PAPHNUTIUS. Listen.

DISCIPLES. And with enthusiastic mind.

PAPHNUTIUS. Truly, just as the major world is made up of four antagonistic elements, but united by the will of God according to the law of harmony, so also man is composed not only of the same elements but also of (two) parts antagonistic to one another.[20]

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[19] This discussion involving microcosm and macrocosm is not so much characteristic of monasticism in Egypt of the fourth century as of a school of the tenth century, before which many a subtle controversy was argued with noisy zest. Gustav Freytag in *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* in a chapter headed, *Aus dem Klosterleben im zehnten Jahrhundert*, remarks that many of the questions so hotly debated in the monastic schools are still favorites among the people to-day. Already in 700 the following two propositions were discussed: "The son of a certain man marries a widow and his father, her daughter. How would the children from these marriages be related? Or: How can a man ferry across a stream a wolf, a goat and a head of cabbage, if he can only take one over at a time and is to prevent one from devouring the other?" In Hrotsvitha's discussion we have simply an anachronism, which, however, enables us to obtain a picture of conditions about six centuries later than the time of the play.

[20] The philosophic views, aired here and as explained by Piltz in the appendix to his translation of Hrotsvitha's plays, are a mixture of the metaphysical principles of Aristotle and the ideas of early medieval scholasticism. Hrotsvitha took her digressions from the legend proper, in part verbatim from the philosophical works of Boethius (*In praedicamenta Aristotelis*, Liber I, *De Substantia*. Cf. citation of parallel passages in the footnotes of the edition of Paul von Winterfeld). The scholastic who rested his case on reason, had recourse to the concept of *substance*. According to his teaching,

DISCIPLES. And what could be more antagonistic than the elements.

PAPHNUTIUS. The body and the soul: for, although they are antagonistic, yet they are bodily; the soul, on the other hand, is not mortal, like the body, nor the body, spiritual, like the soul.

DISCIPLES. That is true.

PAPHNUTIUS. And yet, if we follow the dialecticians, we (must) confess that they are also not antagonistic.

DISCIPLES. And who can deny it?

PAPHNUTIUS. He who knows how to dispute dialectically, because nothing (according to him) is antagonistic to the substance (*usia*, Gr. οὐσία), which is the receptacle of all that is antagonistic.

DISCIPLES. What is the meaning of what you (just) said: "According to the law of harmony."[21]

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man had in himself the consciousness that everything known to him was merely a different manifestation of the same being (οὐσία). This one thing, in reality unchangeable although its manifestations (the most usual of which were material and spirit) are different, was called substance. Spiritual substance are God, the angels and the human soul; bodily substance is everything that can be perceived by the five senses. Bodily substance has four different manifestations in the four elements, namely earth, air, fire and water, which either alone or in combination form all bodies. Macrocosm—in Hrotsvitha *maior mundus*—is made up of these four elements, and God is conceived to be its soul. It therefore obeys the will of God just as the body of man obeys his soul. Micrososm—in Hrotsvitha *minor mundus*—i. e. man, consists like macrocosm of bodily substance, the body, and of spiritual substance, the soul. Microcosm constitutes a world of its own and is not so directly under the influence of God. For this reason it often acts contrary to God's law.

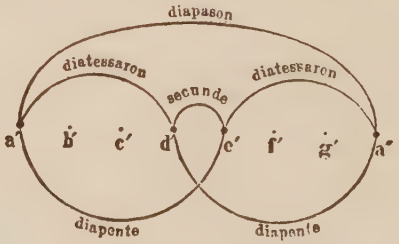
[21] Obviously introduced by Hrotsvitha for the purpose of opening an opportunity to digress on the subject of music. All knowledge in the philosopy of the Middle Ages was apportioned among the seven liberal arts of which Grammar, Dialectics and Rhetoric formed the Trivium, while Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy comprised the Quadrivium. Music had more the connotation of the Science of Harmony and Acoustics, for already back in antiquity Pythagoras had subordinated Music to Mathematics. This discussion of music comes in great part from Boëthius, especially from his *Institutio Musica*. Liber I, cap. II, X–XIX. Paul von Winterfeld has cited in footnotes parallel passages from Boëthius and others, showing Hrotsvitha's indebtedness.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is this: Just as high and low tones, harmoniously combined, produce certain music, so dissonant elements, when suitably harmonized, produce a world (microcosm.)

DISCIPLES. It is strange how things dissonant can harmonize or how things harmonizing can be called dissonant.

Her exposition is clear. The division of music into three categories, namely heavenly, human and instrumental, still holds good to-day. Piltz (p. 179) interestingly calls attention to the historical fact that the greater astronomer, Kepler, calculated the accord in which the seven planets resound. This illuminating note of Piltz also corrects certain misinterpretations of Hrotsvitha's made by Magnin and Bendixen with regard to the concords. As this information is essential to a complete understanding of what follows, I am reproducing the gist of it.

Sounds, of course, are produced by vibrations of the atmosphere. The height of the pitch, i. e. the frequency, depends on the number of vibrations per second. When two notes have frequencies as 1: 2, the relation or interval is called an octave. For instance, if the note a′ has a frequency of 440, the note a^{11}, one octave above it, would have a frequency of 880. In an octave, seven graduations of tone are interpolated. The interval of two consecutive tones is therefore 9:8 and is called a second. Although the number of intervals is infinite, only very few are used in music, because only such tones produce harmony. Hrotsvitha names, besides the *second*, which she considers a special kind of harmony only three concords: the octave, the quint and the quart. The octave comprises eight tones, including both end tones, e. g. a″ to a′; a quint, five tones from a″ to d′; a quint, four tones from a″ to e′. A concord is called by Hrotsvitha, *symphonia*, an octave, *diapason*; a quint, *diapente*; and a quart, *diatessaron*.



The above figure taken by Piltz from Boëthius serves to explain what has just been said. The number of vibrations in the tones a″, d′, e′, a′ are in proportion as 12: 9: 8: 6. If a″ and a′ sound simultaneously, we have a *diapason*, an octave; if a″ and d′, or e′ and a′, we have a *diapente* or quint; if a″ and e′ or d′ and a′ we have a *diatessaron* or quart; finally, if e′ and d′ sound, we have a *secunda* or second.

PAPHNUTIUS. That is because nothing seems to be composed of like elements, nor of those which are joined together by no rational proportion and which are not distinguished from one another in substance and nature.

DISCIPLES. What is music?

PAPHNUTIUS. One of the sciences of the Quadrivium of philosophy.

DISCIPLES. What is that which thou callest Quadrivium?

PAPHNUTIUS. Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, Astronomy.

DISCIPLES. Why Quadrivium?

PAPHNUTIUS. Because, just as four branches leave the cross-road, so these four sciences proceed directly and progressively from the one and the same principle of philosophy.

DISCIPLES. We are afraid to ask thee for information about the other three sciences, because we are hardly able by reason of the limited capacity of our understanding to follow the subtlety of the discussion already begun.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is difficult to grasp.

DISCIPLES. But tell us something, even though only superficially, about that science of which thou just madest mention.

PAPHNUTIUS. I can only tell very little, because it is a subject unfamiliar to hermits.

DISCIPLES. What is it about?

PAPHNUTIUS. Music?

DISCIPLES. Yes.

PAPHNUTIUS. It deals with sounds.

DISCIPLES. Is there one or (are there) many?

PAPHNUTIUS. Three are mentioned, but each one is joined to the other by such simple proportion, that that which is present in one, is not lacking in the other.

DISCIPLES. What difference is there between the three?

PAPHNUTIUS. The first is called heavenly or celestial; the second, human; and the third is that which is practiced with instruments.

DISCIPLES. Of what does celestial music consist?

PAPHNUTIUS. Of the seven planets and the celestial sphere.

DISCIPLES. How is that?

PAPHNUTIUS. For this reason, because it is the same with that music as with instrumental music, as there are in the former just as many intervals, equal gradations and the same concords as in the chords.

DISCIPLES. What are intervals?

PAPHNUTIUS. The spaces that are counted between the planets and the chords.

DISCIPLES. And what are gradations?

PAPHNUTIUS. The same as seconds.

DISCIPLES. We do not understand this nomenclature.

PAPHNUTIUS. A second is the resultant of two tones, which have the ratio of the number *epogdous* or nine to eight.

DISCIPLES. The more quickly we try to understand thy wisdom, the more difficult are the propositions which thou unceasingly settest us.

PAPHNUTIUS. A discussion of this kind requires that.

DISCIPLES. Tell us briefly a little about the concords, in order that we may at least know the meaning of the word.

PAPHNUTIUS. By concord is meant the harmony of a combination of tones.

DISCIPLES. Why is that?

PAPHNUTIUS. Because it is made up now of four, now of five and now of eight tones.

DISCIPLES. Since we have learned that there are three concords, we should also like to know the name of each.

PAPHNUTIUS. The first is called a *diatessaron*, as it were, composed of four, and has the proportion *epitrita*, or four to three. The second is called *diapente*, which is made up of five and is in proportion *emiolus*, or three to two. The third is called *diapason* (octave); the proportion is two to one and consists of eight sounds.

DISCIPLES. Thou dost not mean to say that the sphere and the planets produce tone, that they deserve to be compared to the chords?

PAPHNUTIUS. Yes, and a very strong one.

DISCIPLES. Why can it not be heard?

PAPHNUTIUS. That is explained in various ways. Some assert that it cannot be heard on account of its unbroken continuity; others, on account of the density of the atmosphere; on the other hand certain people claim that the enormity of such sound cannot enter through the narrow passage ways of our ears; there are also some who say that the sphere produces so agreeable, so sweet a sound, that, if it were audible, all mankind, neglecting themselves and abandoning their duties, would follow this enticing sound from sunrise to sunset.

DISCIPLES. Then it is better that it is inaudible.

PAPHNUTIUS. That was foreknown by the Creator.

DISCIPLES. We have heard enough about that music; continue about human music.

PAPHNUTIUS. What do you wish to know about it?

DISCIPLES. Where is it revealed?

PAPHNUTIUS. Not only, as I have said, in the union of the body and the soul, nor in fact only in the emission of the voice, now low, now high, but also in the pulsations of the veins and in the measure of certain members, as well as in the articulations of the fingers, in which we find on measuring them the same proportions which we have shown you in the concords, because not only the accord of the voices is called music, but also that of other dissimilar things.

DISCIPLES. If we had known beforehand that the knot of a question of this kind was so difficult to unravel for the untutored, we should have preferred to remain in ignorance about the minor world, rather than encounter such great difficulty.

PAPHNUTIUS. The effort which you have made is not at all hurtful, since you know some things of which you were ignorant before.

DISCIPLES. That is true; but we weary of this philosophical discussion, since we cannot grasp the subtlety of thy thought.

PAPHNUTIUS. You make sport of me, who am totally ignorant and not a philosopher.

DISCIPLES. And how didst thou come by these things which thou hast just expounded to us and thereby taxed our energies?

PAPHNUTIUS. It is a tiny drop of knowledge, which, without myself being seated to gather it up, but just passing by by chance, I saw fall from the goblet of the sages; I gathered it up and wished to communicate it to you.

DISCIPLES. We thank thee for thy goodness, but we are alarmed by the word of the apostle, who says: "But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."[22]

PAPHNUTIUS. Whether it be the simple or the wise who works evil, he deserves to be put to confusion by God.

DISCIPLES. That is so.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is not the knowledge that one may possess that offends God, but the unjust pride of the learned.

DISCIPLES. That is true.

PAPHNUTIUS. And to whose praise can the knowledge of the arts be more worthily and justly employed than to the praise of Him, who created knowledge and gave us science.

DISCIPLES. To none else.

PAPHNUTIUS. For, the more one understands the admirable law in accordance with which God has regulated everything in number, measure and weight, the more he burns with love for Him.

DISCIPLES. Nor is that without justice.

PAPHNUTIUS. But why do I linger on a topic which brings you so little pleasure?

DISCIPLES. Explain to us the cause of thy sadness, in order that we may no longer be oppressed by the weight of curiosity.

PAPHNUTIUS. When you find it out, you will not be pleased to have heard it.

DISCIPLES. He who is a slave of curiosity, often comes to grief; and yet we cannot overcome it, because it is ingrained in our frailty.

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[22] 1 Cor. I, 27.

PAPHNUTIUS. A shameless woman lives in this country[23]

DISCIPLES. That is a dangerous thing for the citizens.

PAPHNUTIUS. She is resplendent with marvellous beauty but filthy with horrible dishonor.

DISCIPLES. That is deplorable. What is her name?

PAPHNUTIUS. Thaïs.

DISCIPLES. That famous harlot?

PAPHNUTIUS. She herself.

DISCIPLES. Her infamy is known to every one.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is not surprising, because she does not deign to go to destruction with a few, but she is ready to seduce all by the allurement of her beauty and to drag them to destruction with her.

DISCIPLES. That is a sad state.

PAPHNUTIUS. Not only do frivolous youths squander their slender patrimony in paying her attentions, but also wealthy and influential men lose their goods, though not enriching her by their loss.

DISCIPLES. We shudder at hearing it.

PAPHNUTIUS. Flocks of lovers stream to her.

DISCIPLES. They are destroying themselves.

PAPHNUTIUS. These fools, while struggling with blind hearts as to who should approach her, engage in quarrels.

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[23] "Quaedam inpudens femina moratur in hac patria."

Nothing has been said of Terence so far, who according to Hrotsvitha's *Praefatio in Comoedias* was to serve her as a model in style and composition. So completely did she succeed in replacing the "godless content" of his work that to the casual reader there are only two points in which the worldly Terence and the saintly nun absolutely agree.

1. Both have six plays to their credit
2. These plays are, of course, written in the form of dialogue.

To one making more careful investigations of words and phrases, as Bendixen and von Winterfeld have done, other similarities become patent. The above sentence resembles several expositions in Terence especially *Andr.* I, 1.42 and *Heaut.* I, 1.44. Again, whereas the name of the courtesan according to the *Vitae Patrum* form of the legend is *Thaisis*, in Hrotsvitha's play as well as in Terence's *Eunuch* she is called *Thais*. Other reminiscences of Terence may be found mentioned in Bendixen, page 39, and in von Winterfeld's footnotes.

DISCIPLES. One vice engenders another.

PAPHNUTIUS. Then, after beginning a brawl, they now batter each other's faces with their fists and now push each other around with their arms. An inundation of blood drenches the threshold of the brothel.

DISCIPLES. O, what a detestable crime!

PAPHNUTIUS. That is the injury to the Creator that I deplore; that is the cause of my grief.

DISCIPLES. And justly art thou distressed about this; nor do we doubt but that all the citizens of the heavenly realm share thy sorrow.

PAPHNUTIUS. What, if I should go to her under the guise of a lover to see, if perchance she can be recalled from her sinful course?

Disciples. May He who inspired in thee the thought to desire it, grant thee the power to accomplish it.

PAPHNUTIUS. In the meantime uphold me by your continual prayers, in order that I may not be overcome by the cunning of the vicious serpent.

DISCIPLES. May He who overthrew the king of darkness, bestow a triumph against the enemy upon thee.

(ACT II)

(Scene I.)

(A Market Place.)

(PAPHNUTIUS, YOUNG MEN.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Behold, in the Market Place I see some young men. I shall first accost them and inquire where I may find her whom I seek.

YOUNG MEN. See, there is a stranger approaching us; let us find out what he wants.

PAPHNUTIUS. Ho there, young men! Who are you?

YOUNG MEN. Inhabitants of this city.

PAPHNUTIUS. Hail!

YOUNG MEN. And to thee also, Hail! whether thou art a native of this country or a stranger.

PAPHNUTIUS. I am a stranger; I am just now arriving.

YOUNG MEN. Why art thou coming? What seekest thou?

PAPHNUTIUS. That is not to be revealed.

YOUNG MEN. Why?

PAPHNUTIUS. Because it is my secret.

YOUNG MEN. It would be better that thou reveal it to us, because, if thou art not a native, thou wouldst with difficulty be able to accomplish any business among us without the advice of the inhabitants.

PAPHNUTIUS. What if I tell you and thus raise some obstacle in my path.

YOUNG MEN. None (will be raised) by us.

PAPHNUTIUS. I yield to your agreeable promises and trusting in your integrity, I shall tell you my secret.

YOUNG MEN. Thou wilt meet with no infidelity and no opposition on our part.

PAPHNUTIUS. According to the report of certain people, I have learned that there lives among you a woman who offers love and kindness to everyone.

YOUNG MEN. Dost thou know her name?

PAPHNUTIUS. I know it.

YOUNG MEN. What is her name?

PAPHNUTIUS. Thaïs.

YOUNG MEN. It is she herself who inflames our townsmen.

PAPHNUTIUS. They say that she is the fairest the most voluptuous of all womankind.

YOUNG MEN. Those who told thee that did not deceive thee.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is for her that I undertook the hardship of a long trip; I have come to see her.

YOUNG MEN. No obstacle stands in the way of thy seeing her.

PAPHNUTIUS. Where does she live?

YOUNG MEN. There is her house close by.

PAPHNUTIUS. That one, which you are pointing at with your finger?

YOUNG MEN. The very one.

PAPHNUTIUS. I shall go there.

YOUNG MEN. If thou wishest, we will go with thee.

PAPHNUTIUS. I prefer to go alone.

YOUNG MEN. Just as it pleaseth thee.

(Scene II.)

(House of Thaïs.)

(PAPHNUTIUS, THAIS.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Art thou inside, Thaïs, whom I seek.

THAIS. Who is this stranger who speaks?

PAPHNUTIUS. A lover of thine.

THAIS. Whoever cultivates my love, receives from me in return an equal share.

PAPHNUTIUS. O Thaïs, Thaïs, what a most burdensome and lengthy journey I undertook in order that an opportunity might be granted me to speak with thee, to gaze upon thy countenance.

THAIS. I do not withdraw my presence, nor do I deny thee discourse.

PAPHNUTIUS. The private nature of our conversation requires the solitude of a more retired place. (They go into the chamber of Thaïs.)

THAIS. Here is a chamber, well arranged and agreeable for habitation.

PAPHNUTIUS. Is there not another more retired, in which we could speak more privately?

THAIS. To be sure there is another one so hidden, so concealed, that the entrance is known to no one except to me and to God.

PAPHNUTIUS. What God?

THAIS. The true God.

PAPHNUTIUS. Dost thou believe that he knows anything?

THAIS. I know that nothing is concealed from him.

PAPHNUTIUS. Dost thou think that he neglects the deeds of the wicked, or that he maintains his justice?

THAIS. I believe that in his balance of justice the merits of each one are weighed separately and that for each and every one, according to his deeds, either punishment or reward is reserved.

PAPHNUTIUS. O Christ, how admirable is the patience of Thy benignity toward us, who seest those sin who acknowledge Thee and yet delayest to destroy them.

THAIS. Why dost thou tremble and change thy color? Why do thy tears flow?

PAPHNUTIUS. I shudder at thy presumption, I lament thy destruction, because thou knowest these things and destroyest so many souls.

THAIS. Alas, unhappy wretch that I am!

PAPHNUTIUS. The more presumptuously thou knowingly offendest the Divine Majesty, the more justly thou wilt be condemned.

THAIS. Alas! Alas! What art thou doing? Why dost thou threaten an unfortunate?

PAPHNUTIUS. The torture of hell menaces thee, if thou perseverest in wickedness.

THAIS. The severity of thy reproof has shaken me to the bottom of my heart with fear.

PAPHNUTIUS. O would that thou hadst been shaken with terror down to thy entrails, that thou no longer shouldst have the presumption to yield to a dangerous pleasure.

THAIS. And what place for pernicious pleasure can henceforth remain in my heart, where only the bitterness of the deepest sorrow and the new fear of conscious guilt dominate?

PAPHNUTIUS. That is what I desire, that with the spines of vice cut, the pliant twig of compunction might sprout forth.

THAIS. O, if thou only didst believe, O, if thou only didst hope that I, soiled, besmirched and defiled by thousands upon thousands of impurities, could be purged in any respect or could merit pardon by any manner of remorse!

PAPHNUTIUS. In truth, there is no sin so grave, there is no crime so monstrous, which cannot be expiated by penitential tears, if they are followed by effective work.

THAIS. Show me, I beseech thee, my father, by what effective work I can deserve the boon of reconciliation.

PAPHNUTIUS. Despise worldliness, shun the companionship of thy lascivious lovers.

THAIS. And what I am to do then?

PAPHNUTIUS. Thou must retire to a solitary place, where thou mayest examine thyself and bewail the enormity of thy crime.

THAIS. If thou hopest that that may be of advantage to me, I will not delay a single instant.

PAPHNUTIUS. I do not doubt but that it will avail thee.

THAIS. Grant me a small respite, that I may bring forth the mammon, so evilly amassed, which I served so long.

PAPHNUTIUS. Do not concern thyself about that. People, who will enjoy it when found, will not be lacking.

THAIS. I am not disturbed either about wishing to keep it for myself or to give it to my friends; I am not trying to distribute it to the needy, because I do not think that the wages of sin are fit for the work of charity.

PAPHNUTIUS. Thou judgest rightly. And what art thou purposing to do with what thou hast amassed?

THAIS. To surrender it to the flame and reduce it to ashes?

PAPHNUTIUS. Why that?

THAIS. In order that that which I acquired by sin and not without offense to the Creator of the universe, may not be retained in this world.

PAPHNUTIUS. O, how changed thou art from that Thaïs, which thou wast before, when thou didst burn with illicit love and wast inflamed with the passion for gold!

THAIS. Perhaps I shall change for the better, if God will grant it.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is not difficult for His immutable substance to change things, as it pleaseth Him.

THAIS. I shall go and fulfill in deed what I have planned.

PAPHNUTIUS. Go thou in peace and return presently to me.

(Scene III.)

(Market Place.)

(THAIS, HER LOVERS.)

THAIS (*busied heaping gold and jewels on a pyre*). Come ye hither, hasten, my dissolute lovers.

LOVERS. It is the voice of Thaïs calling us. Let us hasten to approach her, in order that we may not offend her by delay.

THAIS. Hasten, approach, in order that I may exchange some words with you.

LOVERS. Thaïs, Thaïs, what is the meaning of the pyre thou art constructing? Why art thou heaping on it this wealth of costly gems.?

THAIS. Do you ask?

LOVERS. We are astonished enough.

THAIS. I shall inform you quickly.

LOVERS. That is what we wish.

THAIS. Look. (*She kindles the pyre.*)

Lovers. Stop, stop, Thaïs. What art thou doing? Art thou mad?

THAIS. I am not mad, but I am returning to reason.

LOVERS. Why that destruction of four hundred pounds of gold with a wealth of other treasures?

THAIS. Everything that I unjustly extorted from you, I wish to be burned, that no spark of hope may be left to you that I may again yield myself to your love.

LOVERS. Stop a moment, stop, and reveal to us the cause of thy disorder.

THAIS. I will not stop, nor will I speak with you.

LOVERS. (*They try to stop her*). Why dost thou disdain and despise us? Thou dost not accuse us of any infidelity, dost thou? Have we not always satisfied thy wishes? And thou pursuest us for nothing with thy unjust hate.

THAIS. Let me go; don't tear my garments by holding on to me. Let it suffice you that up to this time I consented to sin with you; the end of my misdeeds is at hand and it is time for my departure (*She tears herself away and flees*).

LOVERS. Whither is she going?

THAIS. Where none of you will see me hereafter.

LOVERS. How strange! What a prodigy this, that our darling, Thaïs, who always strove to abound in riches, who never withdrew her mind from jollity and gave herself over entirely to pleasure, has destroyed without retrieve such superb objects of gold and precious stones and has disdained and despised us, and has suddenly disappeared.

(SCENE IV.)

(House of Thaïs.)

(THAIS, PAPHNUTIUS.)

THAIS. Here I am, father Paphnutius; I come all in readiness to obey thee.

PAPHNUTIUS. As thou didst make delay in coming, I was racked beyond measure by the fear that thou wast again entangled in worldly affairs.

THAIS. Do not fear that, as I am very differently minded; for in accordance with my wish, I have disposed of my fortune and I have publicly renounced my lovers.

PAPHNUTIUS. Since thou hast renounced them, thou canst now be united to the heavenly bridegroom.

THAIS. It is for thee to prescribe, as with a compass, what I must do.

PAPHNUTIUS. Follow me.

THAIS. I shall follow thee step by step; O, would that I might follow thee also by my actions.

(ACT III.)

(SCENE I.)

(Before a Convent.)

(THAIS, PAPHNUTIUS.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Here is a convent in which a noble college of sacred virgins lives. In this abode I desire thee to spend the time of thy penitence.

THAIS. I do not struggle against thy wish.

PAPHNUTIUS. I shall enter and try to reconcile the abbess, the directress of the virgins, to accept thee.

THAIS. What dost thou bid me to do in the meantime.

PAPHNUTIUS. To come with me.

THAIS. As thou commandest.

PAPHNUTIUS. See, the abbess is coming to meet us. I wonder who has so quickly informed her of our arrival.

THAIS. Dame Rumor, who is held back by no delay.

(Scene II.)

(THE SAME, THE ABBESS.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Thou comest seasonably, illustrious abbess; it is thou thyself whom I seek.

ABBESS. Thy arrival is welcome, venerable father Paphnuus. Blessed be thy coming, who art beloved of God.

PAPHNUTIUS. May the grace of the Sovereign Creator spread over thee the beatitude of his eternal benediction.

ABBESS How come I by this honor that thy sanctity deigns to visit my humble abode.

PATHNUTIUS. There is need of thy aid in a distressing emergency.

ABBESS. Just tell me in a few words what thou wishest me to do; and I shall endeavor with all my might to fulfill thy commands and to satisfy thy desires.

PAPHNUTIUS. I have brought thee a half-dead she-goat, recently snatched from the teeth of the wolves, whom I desire to be warmed by thy compassion and to be cured by thy solicitude, until, having cast aside her rough goat skin, she may be clad in the soft fleece of the sheep.

ABBESS. Explain more clearly.

PAPHNUTIUS. That woman, whom thou seest, led the life of a courtesan.

ABBESS. What misfortune!

PAPHNUTIUS. She gave herself over entirely to lasciviousness.

ABBESS. She destroyed herself.

PAPHNUTIUS. But now, at my exhortation and with the aid of Christ, she has turned her back on the frivolities she was pursuing, and, full of hate for them, craves a life of chastity.

ABBESS. Thanks be unto the author of the change.

PAPHNUTIUS. Since maladies of the soul as well as those of the body, are to be cured by opposite remedies, it is necessary that she be sequestrated from worldly distractions and be shut up alone in a narrow cell, in order that she may meditate upon her transgressions with more leisure.

ABBESS. That is most beneficial to her.

PAPHNUTIUS. Give orders that a cell be constructed as soon as possible.

ABBESS (*giving directions*). Let it be finished in a short time.

PAPHNUTIUS. Let there be no entrance, no exit, but only a small window, through which she may receive a little food, which thou art to supply her sparingly on stated days and at certain hours.

ABBESS. I fear that the tenderness of this woman accustomed to luxury will scarcely endure the rigor of such hardship.

PAPHNUTIUS. Do not be afraid of that; for a grave transgression requires recourse to a desperate remedy.

ABBESS. That is true.

(Scene III.)

(Before Thaïs' Cell.)

(THE SAME.)

PAPHNUTIUS (*to the Abbess*). I am greatly annoyed by these delays, because I fear that she may be corrupted by the appearance of some men.

ABBESS. Why dost thou suffer this uneasiness? Behold the cell that thou didst desire is finished.

PAPHNUTIUS. Excellent. Enter this tiny dwelling, Thaïs, well fitted for thee to weep for thy misdeeds.

THAIS. How narrow, how dark and how unsuitable for a delicate woman to live in.

PAPHNUTIUS. Why dost thou abhor this tiny dwelling? Why dost thou tremble to enter? It is proper that thou who hast roamed about to this day in untamed freedom be now at last restrained in this solitary place.

THAIS. A mind accustomed to pleasure will not often brook a life of austerity.

PAPHNUTIUS. That is why it must be kept in check by the reins of discipline until it ceases to struggle.

THAIS. What thy fatherly care bids me, I in humility do not refuse to undergo, but there is a certain inconvenience in this dwelling which is difficult for my weakness to endure.

PAPHNUTIUS. What is this inconvenience?

THAIS. I blush to mention it.

PAPHNUTIUS. Do not blush, but speak openly.

THAIS. What can be more insupportable and more revolting than that I should bave to attend to all my bodily necessities in one and the same place? There is no doubt but that it will quickly become uninhabitable by reason of the great stench.

PAPHNUTIUS. Fear the torture of eternal hell fire, and cease to dread passing ills.

THAIS. My frailty compels me to be afraid.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is fitting that thou atone for the sweetness of the enjoyment of thy guilty pleasure by the annoyance of the great stench.

THAIS. I do not refuse, nor do I deny, that I, unclean as I am, should not without justice, live in a foul smelling and filthy hut, but what causes me stronger grief, is that there is no place left where I may fittingly and chastely invoke the name of His awe-inspiring Majesty.

PAPHNUTIUS. Whence comes to thee such assurance, that thou presumeth to pronounce the name of His spotless Divinity with thy defiled lips?

THAIS. From whom, then, am I to hope for grace and by whose commiseration am I to hope for salvation, if I am forbidden to invoke even Him against Whom alone I sinned and to Whom alone the devotion of my prayers is due?

PAPHNUTIUS. Thou must not pray to Him openly and with words, but with tears, not with the plaintive tones of thy voice, but with the sighing of a contrite heart.

THAIS. And if I am forbidden to pray to God with words, how can I hope for pardon?

PAPHNUTIUS. The more deeply thou humiliatest thyself, the more quickly thou wilt merit it. Say only, "Thou who hast created me, have mercy upon me."

THAIS. I need His mercy not to be crushed in this doubtful struggle.

PAPHNUTIUS. Fight manfully, that thou mayest happily gain a triumph.

THAIS. It is for thee to pray for me, that I may obtain the palm of victory.

PAPHNUTIUS. There is no need to remind me of it.

THAIS. I hope so. (*She goes into the cell.*)

PAPHNUTIUS. It is time for me to regain the longed for retreat of my solitude and visit my beloved disciples; to thy care, then, to thy pity, venerable abbess, I confide this prisoner that thou mayest both minister to her frail body with necessities and abundantly refresh her spirit with salutary admonitions.

ABBESS. Be without anxiety for her sake, as I cherish her with the affection of a mother.

PAPHNUTIUS. I go.

ABBESS. Depart in peace.

(Scene IV.)

(Cell of Paphnutius.)

(PAPHNUTIUS. DISCIPLES.)

DISCIPLES. Who is knocking at the door?

PAPHNUTIUS. It is I.

DISCIPLES. It is the voice of Paphnutius, our father.

PAPHNUTIUS. Remove the bolt.

DISCIPLES (*opening the door*). Hail! O father.

PAPHNUTIUS. Hail!

DISCIPLES. We were very much perturbed by thy lengthy absence.

PAPHNUTIUS. My absence was of service.

DISCIPLES. What has been done about Thaïs?

PAPHNUTIUS. What I wished.

DISCIPLES. Where is she now?

PAPHNUTIUS. In a small cell she bewails her sins.

DISCIPLES. Praise be unto the highest Trinity.

PAPHNUTIUS. And may Its awe-inspiring Name be blessed now and throughout the ages.

DISCIPLES. Amen.

(ACT IV.)

(SCENE I.)

(Cell of Paphnutius.)

(PAPHNUTIUS.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Behold, three years of Thaïs' penitence have elapsed, and I do not know whether her compunction has been acceptable to God. I shall arise and go to my brother, Anthony, in order that by his intervention the truth may be revealed to me.

(SCENE II.)

(Before the Cell of Saint Anthony.)

(ANTHONY, PAPHNUTIUS.)

ANTHONY (*who sees Paul coming from afar*). What unexpected delight comes to me, what new joy falls to my lot? Is not this my brother and my fellow hermit, Paphnutius? It is he himself.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is I, indeed.

ANTHONY. Thou art welcome, brother, thou overwhelmest me with joy by thy coming.

PAPHNUTIUS. I am no whit less joyful at seeing thee, than thou art at my arrival.

ANTHONY. What is the cause so happy, so agreeable to me that has brought thee here from thy retreat?

PAPHNUTIUS. I shall disclose it.

ANTHONY. I am eager for it.

PAPHNUTIUS. Three years ago there lived among us a certain courtesan, Thaïs by name, who not only delivered herself to destruction but also was wont to drag many others to destruction with her.

ANTHONY. Alas, a deplorable habit.

PAPHNUTIUS. Under the guise of a lover I went to her, and now I soothed her lascivious mind with sweet and caressing exhortations and now I terrified her by menacing her with sharper warnings.

ANTHONY. This forbearance was necessary for such wantonness.

PAPHNUTIUS. Finally she yielded and, spurning her guilty intercourse, she chose chastity and consented to be shut up in a very narrow cell.

ANTHONY. I am so delighted at hearing this that all the veins of my heart throb with joy.

PAPHNUTIUS. Thus it befits thy sanctity; and I myself, though I rejoice beyond measure in the conversion, yet I am troubled by a slight uneasiness, because I fear that her tenderness hardly endures such a protracted burden.

ANTHONY. Where there is true affection, pious compassion is not lacking.

PAPHNUTIUS. That is why I make appeal to thy friendship, that thou and thy disciples may be willing to unite in continual and steadfast prayers with me until Heaven reveals to us whether the benevolent and divine pity has yet been softened to indulgence by the tears of the penitent.

ANTHONY. We willingly consent to thy request.

PAPHNUTIUS. And I do not doubt but that you will be mercifully heard by God.

(Scene III.)

(THE SAME, LATER PAUL.)

ANTHONY. Behold, already the evangelical promise is fulfilled in us.

PAPHNUTIUS. What promise?

ANTHONY. That, in sooth, which promises that those who unite in prayer can obtain every wish.

PAPHNUTIUS. What has happened?

ANTHONY. To Paul, my disciple, a vision has appeared.

PAPHNUTIUS. Call him.

ANTHONY. Paul, approach and explain to Paphnutius what thou hast seen.

PAUL. I saw in the sky, in my vision, a couch magnificently hung with white draperies at the head of which were four shining maidens, and they stood there as though on guard; but as I gazed upon the charm of their wonderful radiance, I said to myself, "This glory suits no one better than Anthony, my lord and father."

ANTHONY. I am not worthy of such bliss.

PAUL. When I had said this, a divine voice resounded, exclaiming, "It is not for Anthony, as thou hopest, but for Thaïs, the harlot, that this glory is reserved."

PAPHNUTIUS. Praise be unto the sweetness of Thy compassion, O Christ, only Son of God, that Thou hast so kindly deigned to console me in my sorrow.

ANTHONY. He deserves to be praised.

PAPHNUTIUS. I shall go and visit my captive.

ANTHONY. It is time that thou promise her the hope of pardon and the solace of eternal bliss.

(Scene IV.)

(Before Thaïs' Cell.)

(PAPHNUTIUS, THAIS.)

PAPHNUTIUS. Thaïs, my adopted daughter, open the window that I may see thee.

THAIS. Who speaks?

PAPHNUTIUS. Paphnutius, thy father.

THAIS. How come I by the happiness of such great joy, that thou shouldst deign to visit me, a sinner.

PAPHNUTIUS. Though I have been absent in body for these three years, nevertheless I have had no little anxiety for thy safety.

THAIS. I do not doubt it.

PAPHNUTIUS. Set forth to me the story of thy change and the measure of thy compunction.

THAIS. That I cannot tell, because I do not know that I have done anything worthy of God.

PAPHNUTIUS. If God observes iniquities, no one can stand before him.

THAIS. Yet, if thou wishest to know what I have done, I gathered up in my conscience into a bundle, as it were, the multitude of my sins, and, reviewing them in my mind, I always contemplated them in order that the dread of hell fire might never be absent from my heart, just as the offensive stench was never absent from my nostrils.

PAPHNUTIUS. Because thou hast punished thyself by thy compunction, thou hast therefore merited forgiveness.

THAIS. O, would that it were so!

PAPHNUTIUS. Give me thy hand that I may lead thee out.

THAIS. No, venerable father, do not tear me, soiled as I am, away from this filth, but let me stay in a place worthy of my misdeeds.

PAPHNUTIUS. It is time that thou shouldst dispel thy fear and shouldst hope for life, because thy penitence is acceptable to God.

THAIS. May the angels render praise to his kindness because He has not despised the humility of a contrite heart.

PAPHNUTIUS. Remain firm in the fear of God and abide in His love. For after fifteen days thou wilt pass out of thy human form, and with the aid of Divine favor, after happily completing thy course of life thou wilt migrate to the stars.

THAIS. O, would that I might escape the torments of hell or at least be burned by milder flames! For it is not due to my own merit that I would be favored with eternal happiness.

PAPHNUTIUS. Grace, the free gift of God, does not weigh human merit, because, if it were granted according to merit, it would not be called grace.

THAIS. Therefore, let the harmony of the heavens, the plants of the whole earth, as well as all species of animals and the confused gurgling of the waters, praise him, not only because he bears with sinners, but also because he lavishes undeserved rewards upon those who repent.

PAPHNUTIUS. From time immemorial it has been His custom to prefer compassion to punishment.

(Scene V.)

(Before the Cell of Thaïs, Fifteen Days Later.)

(THE SAME.)

THAIS. Depart not, venerable father, but stay with me in the hour of my death.

PAPHNUTIUS. I will not go away, I will not leave thee, until thy soul rises on its pinions to the heavens and I have delivered thy body to the grave.

THAIS. Lo, I am beginning to die.

PAPHNUTIUS. Now it is time to pray.

THAIS. Thou who hast created me, have mercy upon me and permit the soul that Thou didst breathe into me to return to Thee in blissful journey.

PAPHNUTIUS. Thou, whom no one has created, who art a truly immaterial Being whose simple essence has formed of one thing and another Man, who is not what He is, permit the various parts of this creature, fallen into dissolution, to return happily to the principle of their origin: that the soul which came from Heaven may have its share in the celestial joy and that the body may softly and peacefully rest in the bosom of the earth, from which it came, until that day when this dust and ashes shall be reunited and the breath of life shall enter anew these limbs and this same Thaïs shall rise again, the same perfect human creature as before, to take her place among the white sheep and to enter upon the joys of eternity, O, Thou who alone art what Thou art, who reignest in the unity of the Trinity, who art eternally glorified century after century.

With this noble prayer, a little stilted but theologically correct, Hrotsvitha's dramatic version of the Thaïs legend comes to an end. There is a tendency on the part of critics to be overzealous in attacking this play largely on the score of the display of learning exhibited in the opening scene. Another thing that detracts from its value is the fact that it is a repetition of the theme of *Abraham* in weakened form. To be sure, it does appear mediocre in contrast with her masterpiece, but when one compares it with its source, the *Vitae Patrum* version of the legend,

one is impressed by the quite considerable originality shown by Hrotsvitha in working up the Christian legend with which, by the way, one was not supposed to take many liberties in the Middle Ages. In more than one of the scenes no small dramatic insight and power are shown. The character of Thaïs, especially, is much better and more sharply drawn.

What are the additions or changes in the legend that Hrotvitha has made?

1. The scholastic discussion of macrocosm and microcosm, of music and harmony, which by itself would not have weakened the force of the play to tenth century readers, just as the medical technicalities of Ibsen and the socialism of H. G. Wells do not vitiate their literary productions in the eyes of the modern world. This discussion probably took its inspiration from the prayer of Thaïs, "Qui me plasmasti, miserere mei." Alice Kemp-Welch in her book *Of Six Mediaeval Women* (p. 25) alludes also to the possibility of influence from an account by Rufinus in the *Historia Monachorum*, where mention is made of a musician who tells of his retirement to a hermitage in order to change the harmony of music to that of the spirit.

2. The introduction of a new character to the legend in the person of the abbess. The exchange of courtesies between her and Paphnutius is probably a reflection of monastic usage of the tenth century and is most interesting for that reason. The enclosure in the cell, while also found in the *Vitae Patrum* version, is probably also reminiscent of dealings with refractory nuns of Hrotsvitha's age.[24]

3. The change in the number of virgins, from three of the legend to four of Hortvsitha's drama, grouped about the magnificent couch appearing in Paul's vision.

4. The rhymed prose, a departure from the simple prose of all previous forms of the legend. This appears throughout the play, but most frequently in the longer passages. Take the opening of the play arranged to show the rhymes and assonances as an illustration.

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[24] Mrs. Blashfield in her *Portraits and Backgrounds* (p. 102) calls attention in this connection to a fetid cell, as cramped as a grave, in which a certain Barbara Ubryk was found buried alive in the middle of the nineteenth century.

DISCIPULI. Cur obscurum, pater, vultum.
nec solito geris Paphnuti, serenum.
PAFNUTIUS. Cuius cor contristatur,
eius et vultus obscuratur.
DISCIPULI. Pro qua re contristaris?
PAFNUTIUS. Pro iniuria factoris.

This feature of Hrotsvitha's dramas furnishes good external evidence of the fact that they are essentially Germanic, since rhyme and assonance which are characteristic of German verse from the tenth century on, are conspicuous features of her rythmical prose.

In closing this discussion of *Paphnutius*, special attention should be called to the earnestness of purpose in evidence throughout the play, even in situations the representation of which would be tabooed in the best art. I feel that these remarks in defense of Hrotsvitha's integrity of character are not altogether superfluous in view of the persistence of adverse criticism mostly, however, on the part of those whose acquaintance with the works of the saintly nun is rather superficial. The statements of J. Scherr in his *Deutsche Kultur-und Sittengeschichte*, Leipzig 1879, p. 85, "Der Zweck Roswithas bei Abfassung ihrer sechs kleinen Dramen . . . war also ein moralisch-ascetishcer, wie er einer Nonne geziemte. Allein es will uns bedünken, dass wir ihrer Nonnenhaftigkeit kaum zu nahe treten, wenn wir vermuten, dass sie, bevor sie ihre Komödien schrieb, sich nicht nur in Terenz, sondern auch in der Liebe umgesehen haben müsse," have been much repeated and have served to give a false impression of her character. Even in the preface of Vellini's excellent French translation (p. 11) one meets such incorrect statements as: "Sa vie avant l'entrée à l'abbaye est obscure tout à fait. Mais l'oeuvre de la célèbre religieuse permet de supposer qu'elle connut tout, du monde, et surtout les tempêtes de l'amour. Les descriptions exactes des mauvais lieux donneraient le droit de croire qu'elle y avait fréquenté." In contradiction to this inference, it should be noted that in the play that has just been translated and which takes us to one of these "bad places," everything that might cast a shadow on her character comes almost verbatim from the *Vitae Patrum*, where in addition

Hrotsvitha got most of the subjects of her plays and also of the eight legends. One might just as well condemn Zola for the filth that appears in his works, though his morality is known to be beyond reproach. Gundlach, who in his work on *Die Heldenlieder der deutschen Kaiserzeit* Bd. I (318–323) has devoted a special discussion to Hrotsvitha's "Persönlichkeit and Sittlichkeit", has unearthed quite a few passages from contemporary saintly writers which it would profit little to repeat. These reveal a startling frankness about matters which are either passed over entirely to-day or are expressed in more euphemistic terms. Hrotsvitha, therefore, in this regard is only a child of her age. The French expression of Madame de Staël, "comprendre, c'est pardonner," is particularly apropos here.

CHAPTER III.

THE LEGEND IN MEDIEVAL FRANCE.

Although Hrotsvitha in thus showing the artistic possibilities of the Thaïs legend rendered a service that was not to be eclipsed for a thousand years, yet her drama was of no immediate influence on the development of the legend either in Germany or elsewhere. Already in the eleventh century she was entirely forgotten, largely because the time was not yet ripe for this kind of art. As Rudolph Köpke in his *Die älteste deutsche Dichterin* (p. 120) so beautifully expressed it, "Wie ein glänzendes Meteor, das am nordischen Himmel emporsteigt, und den überraschten Blick auf kurze Zeit fesselt und blendet, bis seine Strahlen zerfliessen, und rätselhaft wie es gekommen, es in der Tiefe des nächtlichen Dunkels wieder verschwindet; nicht anders ist Roswit am Horizonte der Zeitgenossen vorübergegangen, ihnen, vielleicht sich selbst, ein unverstandenes, nachher vergessenes Rätsel."

MARBOD, BISHOP OF RENNES.

We must turn to France for the next literary adaptation of the Thaïs legend. Early in the twelfth century, Marbod, Bishop of Rennes, wrote a Latin poem of 169 leonine hexameters, based also on the version as found in the *Vitae Patrum*. Marbod enjoyed a wide reputation in his time as an orator and author. His fame as an orator brought him the epithet "King of Orators" and his works were hardly less renowned. Among them there deserve special mention his *Liber de Gemmis*, which gives evidence of the extraordinary credulity that characterized his age and which was imitated in French soon after its appearance, and also his *Historia Theophili metrica*, a subject which Hrotsvitha had likewise treated before him. His reputation as an author probably exceeded his true merit and his treatment of the Thaïs legend shows no originality. But, of course, credit must be given him for his metrical skill and his poetical rendition.

His works were first published at Rennes in 1524. A new and enlarged edition was published by Beaugendre at Paris in 1708. This is found used:

1. In the *Acta Sanctorum*, Mensis Octobris VIII, Vol. 5, pp. 226–228, Brussels 1758, under the title, *Vita altera metrica, auctore Marbodo, Redonensi episcopo, e codice nostro ✠ Ms. 81 cum Parisiensi anni 1708 editione collato.*

2. In Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, t. CLXXI, col. 1629–1634, under the title: *Haec est Vita Sanctae Thaisidis.*

It would hardly be profitable to reproduce or translate the whole poem, as it is essentially the same as the Rosweyd version in more poetic language. I shall, therefore, content myself with a reproduction of the first thirteen lines with an interlinear translation to give a sample of the poetic quality:

Vitam cujusdam mulieris carmine dicam,
The life of a certain woman in verse I shall narrate,
Ut non desperent, qui mundi rebus adhaerent,
In order that those may not despair, who cling to the things of the world,
Sed per eam discant quia vult Deus ut resipiscant,
But through her should learn that God wishes them to repent,
Nec resipiscentes habet ob sua crimina viles,
Nor does he consider those who repent worthless through their defects,
Aut sibi pluris erunt qui crimina non habuerunt,
Or will those be worth more to him who have no defects,
Sed mercede pari jubet hos illosque beari,
But he bids the latter and the former be blessed with equal reward,
Vivitur in coelo concorditur et sine zelo.
There is life and harmony in heaven without jealousy.
Pulchra puella nimis fuit olim nomine Thaisis,
There was once a very beautiful girl Thais by name,
Aegypto tota propter sua crimina nota,
Known in all Egypt for her crimes,
Namque Deum sprevit de cujus munere vivit.
For indeed she spurned God by whose grace she lived.

POÈME MORAL.

The next attempt to put the Thaïs legend to literary use occurred about a hundred years later in a fragmentary poem which its discoverer, Paul Meyer, has christened the *Poème moral.* About the name and the life of the poet nothing at all is known. Originality and skill cannot be denied the author

especially at the beginning, although one critic seems anxious to agree with the author's own self-indictment (strophe 98), "Et povres sui de sens." According to the editor of the whole fragment, Wilhelm Cloetta in *Romanische Forschungen*, Bd III, Erlangen 1887, Paul Meyer has repeatedly expressed the opinion that this poem is one of the most significant and most original of all the works that have come down to us from the Middle Ages. The manner in which the poet speaks to the reader and asks his pardon when he digresses too far from his subject, is quite novel for his age. The dialect is of the most northerly French province, i. e. around Liège, and has an admixture of Walloon. The fragment is written in Alexandrine verse with the rhymes aaaa and consists of 580 strophes. The *terminus ad quem* of the time of composition cannot be beyond the first third of the thirteenth century according to Cloetta.

In the poem are found 75 chapter headings, which are divided into three *distinctiones*, a scholastic expression which became customary in books after the end of the twelfth century. The introduction of the poem itself (strophes 1–26) consists of several remarks about the vanity of our earthly existence. Then follows the life of the Ethiopian robber, Moses (strophes 27–106), and then that of Saint Thaïs (strophes 107–146). With this latter the first *distinctio* ends. The lives of these two saints are to show us how even such reprobates might receive God's mercy.

The second *distinctio* endeavors to show us how much easier and pleasanter it is to serve God than the world. Then the author speaks about greed, riches and prodigality. Next he asserts that every man, no matter what station or calling he may fill, can attain the grace of God. Of this fact he might tell a beautiful example, but he fears that he may bore his readers On second thought, however, he concludes to tell it, because, even if his verses would not benefit anyone, they would certainly harm no one (strophes 427–580).

This story does not reach us after all, as the poem closes at this point. Cloetta is of the opinion that the author had had the poem already fully planned in his mind, i. e. he wished to write of the "tormenz d'enfier" and the life "del saint jugleor," referred to earlier in the poem. The poem is therefore a fragment, not on account of the loss of part of the manuscript bu

because the poet became weary of his undertaking, or rather despaired of surmounting the difficulty he had set in his own path, namely the metamorphosis of a jongleur into a saint.

Especially popular were the 319 strophes about Saint Thaïs, as is evidenced by the fact that of the eight manuscripts of the poem that have come down to us, three contain only the life of Thaïs. As Cloetta shows in detail on pages 242 and 243, this part of the work is based on the Rosweyd version of the poem. There are many original moral digressions, of which the first extends from strophes 125 to 136 and has the chapter heading: "Ke mult est perillouse chose de bealteit et ke mut est folz li hom ki bien seit ke li anemis est fel et si ne se vult de lui partir. VIII." (That beauty is a perilous thing and that the man is very foolish who knows well that the devil is perfidious and does not wish to depart from him.) The longest digression extends from strophe 310 to 371 and has its starting point in the sentence in Rosweyd, "condoluit abbas Paphnutius" (Paphnutius took pity on her). The chapter headings are interesting in showing the kind of more or less irrelevant observations that our morally inclined author drags in: "Ke li justeciers doit estre merciables et droituriers. XXIII." (That the judge should be merciful and just.); "Comfaitement li prestre doient les pecchors ocire. XXIIII." (How the priests should kill off the sinners.); "Ke li mal justisier perdent grant merite par avarisce. XXV." (That bad judges lose great merit by avarice.); "C'om ne doit rien prendre por justise a faire. XXVI." (That (That one should not take anything to do justice.); "Que plus aimet li malz justiciers desturbier que pais. XXVII." (That the bad judge loves disturbance better than peace.); "Ke li bons justeciers ne heit mie celui dont il fait justise, mais le pechiet k'il li fait comparier. XXVIII." (That the good judge is not angry at him whom he is judging but at the sin which he is making him expiate.) There are several other digressions the treatment of which is not dissimilar to those already mentioned.

To give a sample of the style and poetic treatment I shall reproduce a few strophes with interlinear translations, treating easily recognized points of the legend.

Dire vulh d'une damme qui fut de grant beateit.
I wish to tell you of a lady who was of great beauty.
Beateit aiment mut dammes et mut lor vient en greit.
Many ladies love beauty and it comes to them much to their liking.
Mais cil qui lo coviene des beles dames seit,
But he who knows what befits beautiful ladies,
Bien seit que mut font choses que nostre sire heit.
Knows well that they do many things that anger our Lord.
D'une damme vul dire qui fut d'Egipte neie,
Of a lady I wish to tell you who was born in Egypt,
Mut fut de grant beateit, Thaisis fut apeleie.
She was of great beauty, Thaïs was she called.
Par la beateit qu'ele ot fut perdue et dampnee,
By the beauty which she had, would she have been destroyed and dammed,
S'uns sainz hom ne l'ëust a voie raturneie.
If a saintly man had not returned her to the path.
Borjois et chevalier l'avoient enameie.
Citizens and knights had fallen in love with her.
Car il n'avoit si bele en tote la contreie.
For there was not anyone so beautiful in the whole country.
D'or et d'argent astoit et d'orfrois acehmeie,
With gold and silver and lace was she adorned,
Si cum sunt damoiseles cui li secles agreie.
Just as ladies are, whom the world doth please.
La dame dont je di male vie menoit;
The lady of whom I speak was leading a bad life;
Uns sainz hom öit dire les malz k'ele faisoit,
A saintly man heard of the sins she was committing,
Pasnucius ot non, mut sainte chose astoit,
He bore the name, Paphnutius, he was a very saintly person,
Et mut lo salvement des anrmes desiroit.
And he desired greatly the salvation of souls.
Ilh eissit de l'enclostre, ses vestimenz canjat,
He went out of the monastery, changed his clothes,
D'orguilhos dras del secle son cors aparilhat,
With proud raiment of the world his body he decked,
Son palefroit amblant coinntement acemmat,
His ambling palfrey he elegantly equipped,
Vint a l'osteil la dame, deleiz li s'ajostat.
He went to the home of the lady and seated himself at her side.
La cambre eret mut bele, mut gentiment paree,
The chamber was very beautiful, very nobly prepared,
La litiere de pailes et d'orfrois acehmeie,

The couch with draperies and silks was decked,
Ele mimes astoit fierement aorneie:
She herself was proudly adorned:
Por teilz acememenz est mainte anrme dampnee.
By such equipment many a soul is damned.
"Voire," dist li sainz hom, "saveiz vos deu nomer?
"Really," said the saintly man, "dost thou know how to name God?
"Saveiz vos ke deus soit, k'il nos puist esgarder?"
"Dost thou know that there is a God, that He can see us?"
" "Oil" ", dist ele, " "sire, j'en ai öit parleir;
" 'Yes,' " said she, " 'sire, I have heard speak of him;
" "Bien sai ke devant deu ne se puet nuz celeir." "
" 'Well do I know that nothing can be concealed from him.' "
Quatre cenz livres d'or avoit ele d'avoir,
Four hundred pounds of gold she had of property,
Cel fist en mi la rue devant la gent ardoir;
That she put in the middle of the street to burn before the people;
Nule rien n'en retint de quant que pot avoir.
Nothing at all did she retain of all that she might have.
Lors eissit de la vile, n'atendit nes lo soir.
Then she departed from the city, she did not even wait till evening.
"Mais sire, or m'aprendez comment je doi oreir."
"But sire, now instruct me how I should pray."
Il dist: " "Vos n'estes digne pas de deu a nomeir,
He said, " 'Thou art not worthy of naming God,
" "Ne digne n'estes mie voz mains al ciel leveir,
" 'Thou art not worthy of raising thy hands to heaven,
" "Lo ciel ne les etoiles ne deveiz regardeir.
" 'Neither heaven nor stars shouldst thou regard.
" "Ades vers orient vostre cors encligniez
" 'Continually incline thy body toward the east
" "Et par ceste orison nostre sanior proiez
" 'And by this prayer beseech our Lord
" "Et si dites sovent, gardeiz ne l'obliiez;
" 'And thus say often, take care lest thou forget it:
" "Sire qui moi formastes, de moi mercit aiez!' " "
" " 'Sire, who didst create me, have mercy upon me!' " "
Dont l'ostat de laenz, et cant il l'en geita
Later he took her out of there, and when he delivered her from there
Ne mais ke quinze jors al secle demora.
No more than fifteen days did she remain in this world.
Cui ele ot bien servit buen defin li dona,
He whom she had served well, did give her a good end,
Li cors remeist en terre, l'anrme a deu s'en ala.
The body remained on earth, the soul did flee to God.

LA VIE DES ANCIENS PÈRES.

A second attempt to impress laymen through the attractive Thaïs legend with the doctrine that Divine mercy can be attained despite great sins, was made in a poem of 160 strophes called "*Thais*," This is only one of a collection of poems generally called *La Vie des Anciens Pères.* Just as in the case of the *Poème Moral*, the author of this poem is also unknown; nor is his country or station in life settled. From his intimate knowledge of the Scriptures and various expressions of opinion about lay poetry and jongleurs, which Edward Schwan in *Romania* XIII (pp. 233–263) has discussed in greater detail, it is generally assumed that he was connected with the Church. About a score of different poems have been assigned to the collection in which *Thais* occurs and several have been recently reprinted from the manuscripts. Unfortunately *Thais* is not one of these, and my direct acquaintance with the text is, therefore, limited to a few strophes that Nau has reprinted in his oft mentioned article. These, with interlinear translations, will serve as a sample of the style and treatment.

After a rather long beginning one finds:

Ci aprés vos cont d'une dame
Hereafter I shall tell you of a lady
Qui en Egypt fut iadis,
Who was in Egypt in time gone by,
L'estoire briément vos devis.
The story I shall briefly communicate to you.
Tays ot nom la demoisele
The young lady bore the name of Thais
Qui tant fu avenant et bele.
Who was so becoming and beautiful.

* * * * * * * * *

Mes la biauté riens ne valust,
But her beauty was worth nothing,
Ele fut trop abandonnée,
She was too abandoned,
Emis ot dure destinée,
Thus she had the bad resolution,
Que chascun ot de son cors gent,
That each man have of her fair body,
Son voloir por de son argent.
His will for his money

Tays ainsi se demena
Thais thus conducted herself
Les plus forts au néant mena
The strongest she brought to nothing
Et molt bien les sauoit avoir.
And very many did she know how to possess.
Et mestre hors de lor auoir.
And she (was) mistress withal of their property.

* * * * * * * * *

Tant dure amor come argent dure,
So long does love last as the money lasts,
Et d'autre amor n'a fame cure.
And for other love the woman has no care.
Tays en péchié se maintint,
Thais maintained herself in sin,
Toziorz au miex vestu se tint,
Always in best raiment did she keep herself,
Et a celui qui plus donna,
And to him who gave more,
Celui serui, celui ama,
Him she served, him she loved,
Tant qu'il ot la borse enflée.
As long as he had his purse well filled.

* * * * * * * * *

Molt fu Tays bien sermonnée,
Very well was Thais preached to,
Par le sermon fut tant menée.
By the talk she was so much affected,
Quisques au cuer le senti
That she felt it in her heart
Et li promit qui'ele feroit,
And promised him that she would do,
Quand que de par Dieu li diroit.
Whatever he would tell her in God's name.

* * * * * * * * *

La vérité leur aconta.
The truth he told them.
Que Tays lendemain morroit
That Thais would die on the morrow
Parce que plus vivre ne porroit.
Because she could live no longer.

Li hermite li dit: Amie
The hermit said to her: Friend,
Mout est corte la vostre vie
Passing short is this life of yours
A nuit mes vos entendrez
To-night you will hear no more
Et demain y (au ciel) regarderez
And to-morrow you will behold it (Heaven)
De por Dame Diez ie vos di
By the Holy Lady I tell you this
A lendemain endroit midi.
To-morrow at noon exactly.

* * * * * * * * *

Quand la messe li fut chantée
When the mass was sung for her
Et de morir fut aprestée
And she was ready to die
A mont vers les cieux regarda.
She looked up toward the heavens.

The moral at the end is:
Or si vos dirai mon avis
Now if I am to give you my advice
Les menaces de Dieu tremez
Tremble before the threats of God
Et ses commandements amez
And love his commandments
Et qui autrement le fera
And he who shall do otherwise
A dapnacion en ira,
Will go to damnation for it,
Le Dieu qui tot set, ne nos ment
The God who knows all, does not lie to us
Nos en a fait demostrement.
Of that he has given us proof.

OLD FRENCH PROSE VERSIONS.

The manuscripts of these versions are unedited and, therefore, have not been accessible to me. According to Nau, they offer little that is interesting with the exception of one that has the distinction of alone having utilized the Latin version 1773 (L) (cf. p. 33), which mentions the mother of Thaïs in a passage of which the following is a translation:

Saint Thaïs was of a city of Egypt; *having been badly raised by her mother*, she abused her beauty and abandoned herself to all sorts of disorders.

The author of this adaption adds the following maxim borrowed from Saint Augustine:

"La volupté est douce, mais Dieu l'est encore davantage." (Pleasure is sweet, but God is still more.)

This manuscript (Français 13498) of the seventeenth century is very beautifully written.

THE THAIS LEGEND IN OTHER ROMANCE LANGUAGES.

There are undoubtedly many other unedited versions of the Thaïs legend in the Romance Languages, as is shown by the communication of the names of several in Spanish and Italian to Wilhelm Cloetta by Emil Picot (cf. *Romanische Forschungen* III, pp. 10 and 11):

1. *Taide Alessandria, opera scenica* (in prose).

In Ronciglione, per il Menichelli, 1667, in -12.

2. *La Taide convertita*, rappresentazioni spirituali (In versi sciolti) di Ambrogoi Leoni, Veneziano. In Venezia, per Grazioso Percaccino, 1598, in —4.

Ivi, pel medesimo, 1599, in —4.

Ivi, pel medesimo, 1605 in -12.

Ivi, per Gherardo Imberti, 1621, in -12.

(Allacci)—

3. *Santa Taez*, comedia de Don Fernando Zárate y Castronovo (XVII siècle?)

Pedroso, catálogo, 508a.

Santa Taez, comedia de Don Francisco de Rojas y Zorilla. Pedroso, 341a.

"Ces deux piéces n'en sont peut-être en réalité qu'une seule."

THE OLD SWEDISH VERSION

An interesting use made of this legend which owes its inspiration to French sources, is found in an Old Swedish saga (cf. Paul's *Grundriss der Germanischen Philologie* Bd. II, 1. Abt., p. 872). A son of King Hákon, the Old, Hákon, the Young, who received the title of king in 1240, but who died before his

father (1257), translated into Old Swedish the story of the heathen son Josaphat and his teacher Barlaam, giving it the title *Barlaams saga ok Josafats.* The parables and legends, which are found in the original, led to the introduction of new ones. In imitation of the *Speculum historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais, the legends of Saint Gregory (cf. 65–67), of Pelagia (ch 89) and of Thaïs (ch. 91) were inserted. The saga has been inaccessible to me. For editions, consult Mogk in the article referred to above.

CHAPTER IV

MODERN VERSIONS OF THE THAIS LEGEND.

Anatole France and Hrotsvitha.

The Thaïs legend threatened to pass into oblivion when a sudden renaissance of interest in the "Rara avis in Saxonia," as Bodo called Hrotsvitha, took place in the nineteenth century. In 1839, Gustav Freytag wrote his dissertation *De Hrosvitha poetria* in Germany and in the same year Charles Magnin wrote his article *Hrosvita: De la Comédie au dixième Siècle* with a translation of *Paphnutius* in the *Revue des deux Mondes* in France. Six years later Magnin's complete translation of the six comedies appeared and it was the echo of this book which in all probability aroused the interest of Anatole France in the eleventh muse, as she was styled by Willibald Pirkheimer, a contemporary of Conrad Celtes.

That Anatole France had a sincere and loving interest in the Saxon nun is evidenced by the fact that at least two delightful discussions of her are found in *La Vie littéraire*, which appeared in four series from 1888 to 1892, and contains a large amount of literary criticism that appeared in "Le Temps" and in scattered articles. The first one occurs in an article on *Les Marionettes de M. Signoret* in the second series (Calmann-Lévy pp. 145–150). It appears that M. Signoret had successfully performed Cervantes and Aristophanes with marionettes and Anatole France was looking forward with gleeful anticipation to the presentation of of Joan of Arc, he remarks, [25] "Finally, since it is the nature of man to desire without limits, I formulate a final wish. I shall therefore say that I am very anxious that the marionettes should play one of those dramas of Hroswita, in which the virgins of the Lord speak with so much simplicity."

[25] The translation of A. W. Evans, New York 1914, is here used.

Then he tells of the significance of Hrotsvitha and narrates in a few words the plot of *Abraham*. Returning to the marionettes, he says: "That was the abbess of Gandersheim's notion of how to handle a situation. She had no wit. She was as innocent as a poet, that is why I like her. If I ever obtain the honour of being presented to the actress who plays the leading parts in the marionette theatre, I shall throw myself at her feet, I shall kiss her hands, I shall touch her knees, and I shall beg her to play the part of Mary in my abbess's comedy. I shall say: Mary, the niece of Abraham was an anchoress and a courtesan. These are great situations which are expressed by a small number of gestures. In them a beautiful marionette like you will surpass the actresses of the flesh. You are quite small, but you will appear great because you are simple, whereas a living actress would in your place appear small. Besides, there is nobody but you left to express religious feeling nowadays.

That is what I shall say to her, and perhaps she will be persuaded. A truly artistic idea, an elegant and noble thought, should enter into the wooden head of the marionette more easily than into the brain of a fashionable actress."

Finally in a footnote he expresses his great satisfaction that by the intercession of a certain Maurice Bouchor his wish has been fulfilled and the marionettes have acted Hrotsvitha's *Abraham*. He promises a more detailed discussion in a future chat.

This appeared in the third series (pp. 10–19) in an article entitled *Hroswitha aux Marionettes*. After again commenting on his peculiar fascination for marionettes, he explains their superiority to actors. In the first place, they are made for what they do, and their nature conforms to their destiny. It is by virtue of this harmony of form and expression that such an atrocity as he recently witnessed would be impossible. A lady with a snub nose would never appear in the role of a sister of Helen, a circumstance that spoiled a whole evening for him. In short, marionettes correspond to his idea of the theatre, for they are pure and innocent symbols and also correspond more to the conception that Shakespeare and Sophocles had of actors. And if Aeschylus were to return to this earth and would visit France on the occasion of the exposition, he felt sure that he would have all his tragedies acted by M. Signoret.

Then he mentions again that recently they presented a comedy of the *Rose blanche* or the *Voix claire*, and he reviews in words that show his love and admiration the salient details of her life. Like Magnin and Chasles he discusses the presentation of these comedies by the nuns before the court, a theory to which no credence is given by the best critics to-day. Four of the plays are mentioned, namely: *Dulcitius*, *Callimachus*, *Paphnutius* and *Abraham*. The last is again discussed in greater detail than before and in closing he says (p. 19), "On this subject, the White Rose of Gandersheim, with the purpose of showing the final triumph of chastity, has written a comedy replete with both naïveté and audacity, and with barbarity and subtlety, and which the Saxon nuns in the time of Otto the Great, and the marionettes of the rue Vivienne alone could present."

ANATOLE FRANCE'S "THAIS."

The attention of scholars and lovers of literature was more forcibly turned to the Thaïs legend and to Hrotsvitha by the appearance of one of Anatole France's most interesting and popular novels, *Thaïs*. This was published by Calmann-Lévy in 1890; it has also been published by Ramagnol (1900) and Ferroud (1909) in French. It was translated into English by Robert B Douglas and published in 1909, 1914 and 1920 by John Lane in London and New York. The quoted passages are from Douglas' translation of 1920.

The novel opens with a description of monastic life in the Thebaid about three hundred miles down the Nile from Alexandria. There both hermits and cenobites passed their days in asceticism and contemplation. The time is indicated by a reference to Saint Anthony who was already more than one hundred years old. As he was born in 251, our story begins at about the middle of the fourth century. As Anthony had returned to Mount Colzin with a few well-beloved disciples, "there was no monk in the Thebaid more renowned for his good works than Paphnutius, the Abbot of Antinoe. Ehprem and Serapion had a greater number of followers, and the spiritual and temporal management of their monasteries surpassed his. But Paphnutius observed the most rigorous fasts, and often

went for entire days without taking food. He wore a very rough hair shirt, he flogged himself night and morning, and lay for hours with his face to the earth."

But his life had not always been thus. He "was born in Alexandria of noble parents, who had instructed him in all profane learning. He had even been allured by the falsehoods of the poets, and his early youth had been misguided" . . . To his twenty-four disciples who imitated his austerities he used to say of that period in his life. "I seethed in the cauldron of false delights."

One day he bethought himself of a very beautiful actress, named Thaïs, whom he had remembered seeing at the theatre in Alexandria. "This woman showed herself in the public games, and did not scruple to perform dances, the movements of which, arranged only too cleverly, brought to the mind the most horrible passions." Only his youthful timidity and his lack of funds had prevented him from committing an indiscretion then. Now in the desert her image appeared to him again and again and he conceived the plan of going back to Alexandria to save her from perdition. Leaving his hut and his disciples he betook himself to the saintly Palemon, a holy hermit, who lived some distance away, to ask his advice. Although the latter cautioned him against abandoning his life of solitude and mingling again in a world with which he had lost all contact, Paphnutius could not bear to leave Thaïs any longer in the power of the demon that possessed her. He interpreted the sight of a male plover tearing the meshes of a hunter's net in which the female had been caught, as a propitious omen from God and started on his journey down the Nile, seeing many manifestations of the devil along the banks.

After many weary days he reached the city of Alexandria, which arose before him, the embodiment of idolatry and hate. On entering by the Gate of the Sun he was hooted and struck with stones by a band of children. But undaunted he continued with rapid steps on his way through the streets still familiar to him after ten years of absence to the house of a former friend, Nicias, an apostle of pleasure and of the enjoyment of life. The slave that answered the knock tried to drive him from the door and even beat him across the face with a stick, but Paphnutius held his ground, and the porter, impressed by his stoicism, re-

ported his presence to his master. Nicias had just finished his bath and cordially received his friend, who looked more like a wild animal than a man. He was already congratulating him for renouncing his Christian superstitions and for returning to his old life, when Paphnutius quickly disillusioned him. He also asked his friend for the loan of a perfumed tunic, gilt sandals and a purse of a thousand drachmae for the love of God and in remembrance of their old friendship. Then he also told his host of his purpose. Nicias mocked him in his cynical way for coming from the depths of the Thebaid to talk about Thaïs. His last words were, "Beware of offending Venus; she is a powerful goddess. She will be angry with you, if you take away her chief minister."

Aimlessly wandering about through the city, he found himself after some time on a quay, and seating himself on a coil of rope, he fell asleep. After an orgy of disquieting visions, he suddenly felt himself pushed and dragged amidst a crowd of people who were all hurrying in the same direction. An obliging stranger informed him of the cause of all the hurry and jostling and even invited him to come along. Thinking that it would further his designs to see Thaïs in the games, Paphnutius decided to accept and was greatly scandalized to see her in Polyxena, the idol of all the people.

An hour after this brilliant preformance, Paphnutius knocked at the door of Thaïs' house. "An old black slave woman, loaded with rings, opened the door, and asked what he wanted.

"I wish to see Thaïs," he replied. "God is my witness that I came here for no other purpose."

As he wore a rich tunic, and spoke in an imperious manner, the slave allowed him to enter.

"You will find Thaïs," she said, "in the Grotto of the Nymphs.

Thus ends the first chapter, fittingly entitled *Lotus*. The second chapter, entitled *Papyrus* takes us back to Thaïs' childhood. She was born in poverty, but of free parents. Her father kept an inn at Alexandria near the Gate of the Moon, which was frequented by sailors. He used to sit in the tavern with his legs crossed, a sullen and morose figure. Her mother, thin and wretched, had the reputation of being a witch and a miser. As it was, Thaïs was left to live as she pleased. Often she would stealthily purloin coins from drunken sailors and

would run to buy honey-cakes with them from an old woman who crouched behind her baskets under the Gate of the Moon. The only person who showed her any kindness was Ahmes, the house-slave, a Nubian, as black as the darkest night. Building on the confidence she showed him, he began in her seventh year to talk to her of God, and two years later at her request he had her baptized by Bishop Vivantius in the catacombs of Alexandria.

When she reached her eleventh year, three years before Constantine issued an edict granting toleration to Christians, she was deeply saddened and shocked to lose her faithful friend by crucifixion, because it was rumored that he was inciting slaves to revolt on account of his addresses to poor wretches in which he promised them "that all slaves would soon be free and that the day of justice was at hand." The technical charge brought against him was the theft of a silver salt-cellar.

Not long thereafter Thaïs ran away as the result of cruel treatment by her avaricious mother. It was an old woman, who went about the country with a troupe of girls and boys, who by flattery and promises of a brilliant future had induced her to take this step. With the help of a whip she taught Thaïs how to play, dance and act, so that she soon became an excellent musician, pantomimist and dancer. To the rich merchants of the city who gave banquets she soon became well known, not only as a dancer and flute player but also as an accomplished lover, who abandoned herself without discrimination to all.

One night she met Lollius, the son of a proconsul, and she felt that a new, unknown and invincible passion dominated her. The spell lasted six months. Then she returned once more to her life of debauchery. Finally she went on the stage and after a hard struggle became the rage in Antioch. Returning to Alexandria, she repeated her triumphs there. "The golden city joyfully welcomed her, and loaded her with fresh laurels." There, among others, she met the philosopher, Nicias, the friend of Paphnutius. She was fascinated by his wit and gave herself over to dalliance with him in despair of meeting another Lollius. Sometimes she thought of her baptism and was troubled. One night she enveloped her fair form in a long cloak and black hood and went to the poor little church of Saint John the Baptist, and there almost forgotten memories were vividly recalled to her mind.

With Thaïs in this frame of mind, Saint Paphnutius, when he earnestly plead with her after his admission to the Grotto of the Nymphs recorded at the end of the first chapter, had comparatively little difficulty in persuading her to flee from the environment of which she had become weary. But she insisted on first fulfilling an engagement for supper that evening at which Cotta, the Prefect of the Fleet, would be host. To this Paphnutius was reluctant to consent, but he determined to act prudently and asked to be allowed to accompany her.

The splendid banquet scene is then unrolled before us. It would be presumptuous to try to reproduce the scintillating brilliancy of this symposium in which Hermodorus, the High Priest of Serapis, the philosophers Dorion, Nicias, Zenothemis and Eucrites, the poet Callicrates, and Marcus, the Arian, discuss philosophy and religion. The discussion ends dramatically with the suicide of Eucrites, the stoic, while he was conversing with his friends. This tragedy brings the banquet to an end.

The sun had already risen over the city, when Paphnutius emerged from the house, leading the actress by the hand. Emphasizing his plea of the vanity of earthly things by the events that had just occurred, he easily persuaded the already world-weary Thaïs to enter a convent in charge of the pious Albina, the grand niece of Emperor Carus. But first she must burn the fruits of her profligacy. Thaïs assembles her slaves and commands them to do Paphnutius' bidding. A huge fire was built, and all that was in the house and the Grotto of Nymphs was thrown into confusion. Even the ivory Eros, a marvellous antique work, worth a hundred times its weight in gold, followed the rest, despite Thaïs' pleas for its conservation. Neighbors, passers-by and creditors, attracted by the noise and flames, gathered in threatening multitudes, and Paphnutius would surely have lost his life for persuading the popular actress to desert them, had not the cynical Nicias chanced by and changed the anger of the mob to avarice by opening his purse and throwing pieces of gold and silver among the crowd. In the confusion Paphnutius and Thaïs escaped under the protection of their mutual friend, Nicias. Cursing him as a child of hell and a backslider, in spite of his good deed, Paphnutius tore Thaïs away from him, and then they started on their way over stony roads and under a burning sun to the convent. Only once did

pity enter Paphnutius' heart as he saw a drop of blood drip from Thaïs' foot on the sand. Finally they arrived at the convent and he requested Albina to confine her in a narrow chamber where there was but a bed, a table and a pitcher. Then "he went to the side of a spring, and took a handful of wet clay, mixed it with a little spittle and a hair from his head, and plastered it across the clink of the door" to seal it. That done, he "lowered his hand over his eyes, and walked slowly away."

In the third chapter, entitled *Euphorbe*, we find Paphnutius back in the holy desert. His reputation for sanctity and good works had increased immeasurably, but his soul was suffering. Visions of Thaïs kept returning to him and as the days went on he gradually lost all confidence in himself. Convinced, after many weeks of mental torture, that these images of Thaïs emanated from the devil, he determined to leave his cell once more, to expiate his sin and to flee from impure thoughts. His friend Palemon, to whom he repaired again, advised him to seek distraction by visiting the wonderful monasteries about the country, especially that of Serapion. Returning to his cell and finding no rest, he had a dream one night in which he saw a high stone column and he heard a voice saying, "Ascend the pillar." Without any delay he left his cell once more, walking day and night until he came upon the ruins of an old Egyptian temple, twenty-nine columns of which still supported a heavy stone entablature. The thirtieth had shaken off its old burden and Paphnutius immediately recognized it as the one he had seen in his dream. By means of a wooden ladder he ascended to the top thirty-two cubits from the ground and there he remained for a whole year. Food was supplied to him by the people from below. The news of this new mode of monastic life spread all over the country, so that people came far and wide to see him, including such personages as Saints Ephrem and Serapion and Cotta, Prefect of the Alexandrine Fleet. A whole city grew up about the column, and the crippled and maimed came in legions to be cured by miracles. But Paphnutius saw the body of Thaïs everywhere until one day he thought he heard the devil mocking him for his gullibility in having ascended the column as Jesus did the pinnacle of the temple. In the same night he descended and wandered blindly into the Lybian hills until he fell exhausted before a tomb which stood near a spring

surrounded by palms. In this tomb, ornamented with images and inhabited by reptiles he castigated himself still more. A young girl playing a theorbo continually kept Thaïs before his mind. Thus he was tempted unceasingly in body and spirit.

One day after a particularly agonizing mental and spiritual struggle, he fell senseless to the ground, and on awakening found himself in the midst of monks wearing black hoods, who were pouring water on his temples. Finding that they were on their way to visit Saint Anthony, who was now 105 years old and who had received a premonition of his approaching end, he was persuaded to accompany them. It was only with great difficulty that Paphnutius could convince them that he really was the one he claimed to be, because they were fully convinced that Paphnutius had been carried aloft from the top of the column to heaven by the angels. As they neared Mount Colzin, the road was lined with monks and suddenly a shout arose at the approach of the venerable father, Anthony. As he passed along Paphnutius, on seeing him approach, fell upon his knees and asked for his blessing. Without answering, Anthony made a sign to Paul, called the Fool, to approach him and tell what he saw in heaven.

"Paul the Fool raised his eyes; his face shone, and his tongue was unloosed.

'I see in heaven,' he said, 'a bed adorned with hangings of purple and gold. Around it three virgins keep constant watch that no soul may approach it, except the chosen one for whom the bed is prepared.'

Believing that this bed was the symbol of his glorification, Paphnutius had already begun to return thanks to God. But Anthony made a sign to him to be silent, and to listen to the Fool, who murmured in his ecstasy—

'The three virgins speak to me; they say unto me: 'A saint is about to quit the earth; Thaïs of Alexandria is dying. And we have prepared the bed of her glory, for we are her virtues—Faith, Fear, and Love.''

Anthony asked—

'Sweet child, what else seest thou?'

Paul gazed vacantly from the zenith to the nadir, and from west to east, when suddenly his eyes fell on the Abbot of Antinoe. His face grew pale with holy terror, and his eyeballs reflected invisible flames.

'I see, "he murmured, 'three demons, who, full of joy, prepare to sieze that man. One of them is like unto a tower, one to a woman, and one to a mage. All three bear their name, marked with red-hot iron; the first on the forehead, the second on the belly, the third on the breast, and those names are — Pride, Lust, and Doubt. I have finished.' "

But Paphnutius heard only, "Thaïs is dying!" In delirium he turned his steps to the north, all the while cursing God and his folly for not having possessed Thaïs while there was yet time. When he reached the convent he found Thaïs on the point of death with her sister nuns reciting prayers for the dying one. In frenzied despair he knelt down and threw his long black arms around her crying: "Do not die! I love thee! Do not die! Listen, my Thaïs. I have deceived thee? I was but a wretched fool. God, heaven—all that is nothing. There is nothing true but this worldly life, and the love of human beings. I love thee! Do not die! That would be impossible—thou art too precious! Come, come with me! Let us fly! I will carry thee far away in my arms. Come, let us love! Hear me, O my beloved, and say, 'I will live; I wish to live.' Thaïs, Thaïs, arise!"

But she did not hear him, and after uttering a few words about the heavens opening before her, she sank back dead. Paphnutius fled in disgrace, branded a vampire by the saintly nuns.

It would be a useless task and a disparagement of the author's wide reading to try to trace all the sources of this novel. It is only possible to touch on a few points where the indebtedness is obvious.

There is no doubt but that Hrotsvitha furnished the inspiration for this romance of incomparable beauty. The *Vitae Patrum* and the *Legenda Aurea* are responsible for the general trend of the story. The suggestion about Thaïs' life as a child and her maltreatment by her parents must have come from the Latin manuscript L or derivatives or a Greek version. But the novel follows most closely of all Hrotsvitha's play:

First, Anatole France probably got his suggestion for the philosophic and religious symposium from the scholastic discussion of music and the universe at the beginning of Hrotsvitha's comedy.

Second, The introduction of the abbess of the convent, christened Albina by Anatole France, also comes from Hrotsvitha, who, it will be remembered, created this character.

But in comparing these two works, one ought not to emphasize their resemblance too much. Of course the novelist has infinitely improved the polish and artistry of Hrotsvitha's diamond in the rough, but, as Mrs. Blashfield puts it (p. 94), "The pure and delicate aroma of the original has been lost in the process." Hrotsvitha is devoutly sincere, whereas in this novel Anatole France is at his height as a genial skeptic. It would never have crossed the mind of the holy nun to besmirch the character of a venerable saint and to permit him to be called a hideous vampire by Albina's nuns, him "to whom many churches and monasteries are dedicated, and whose intercession is daily sought by thousands of eastern Christians." Mrs. Blashfield even goes so far as to call him an "erotomaniac" and expresses the thought that Anatole France would probably have shown a little more hesitation at marring the sanctity of one venerated in regions farther west. But with his well known tendency to ridicule everything held dear by the protagonists of Christianity, one may well doubt whether he would have shown such leniency. After he had devoted five sevenths of his novel to describing the victory of good over evil, with gleeful irony he narrates the triumph of the flesh over the spirit. The efforts of Paphnutius to check his slowly awakening, but all the more irresistibly growing, love for Thaïs, seems to be ironically mocked by the increase of his reputation as a saint. And as he sits upon the top of his column far away from human distraction and near as possible to God to purge his mind of sinful thoughts, vice flourishes in the populous town of Stylopolis that grows up around it. But credit must not be withheld solely on this account. The skill with which each one of Paphnutius' actions is psychologically motivated is marvellous. And the tragic effect is heightened by the very downful of this doughty champion of Christian religious and monastic zeal before the insidious attacks of the all powerful Aphrodite.

As for other sources of this novel, it is hardly necessary to state that it is redolent throughout with a sanctity that emanates from the lives of many Christian saints. Many occurrences originally attributed to others are attributed to Paphnutius. Conspicuous are the following:

1. The episode of the ascent of the column is undoubtedly borrowed from the life of Saint Simon Stylites, a feat which Anatole France himself imitated while still a boy, by climbing a kitchen pump after having listened to his mother read to him of this austerity.

2. The sojourn in the tomb teeming with snakes to kill the yearning of the spirit and flesh for Thaïs is evidently taken from the Life of Saint Anthony, which Anatole France himself sketches in the second series of *La Vie littéraire* (pp. 215–227) under the title, *Le Grand Saint Antoine.*

All these old and venerable sources were reinforced by many realistic touches obtained from modern researches by E. Amélineau into the Coptic manuscripts buried in Egyptian monasteries and churches. His interest in Amélineau's attempt to gather these monuments for a history of Christian Egypt is evidenced by his reference to him in the third series of *La Vie littéraire*, where he discusses one of his investigations dealing with *La Vie de Schnoudi.*

The philosophic nihilism so brilliantly arrayed in the second chapter, has its model in Flaubert's *La Tentation de Saint Antoine* and is taken in part also from a book on the Greek skeptics, *Les Sceptiques grecs*, by Victor Brochard, which furnishes the basis of his discussion in the third series of *La Vie littéraire*, entitled *Sur le Scepticisme.*

MASSENET'S THAIS.

It was almost a foregone conclusion that Anatole France's rejuvenated form of the Thaïs legend, so rich in possibilities for dramatic and scenic effects, would not remain unnoticed by libretto writers. Louis Gallet, who was one of the small army of librettists who vied with one another in attracting the attention of Jules Massenet, the famous composer (1842–1912), (for to be favored with the acceptance of a libretto, was tantamount to becoming famous) turned Anatole France's novel into a form fit for the divine garb of music. In 1894 *Thais, une Comédie lyrique* was produced for the first time with Sibyl Sanderson in the title role. It is written in three acts and seven scenes, and, as would naturally be expected, is a very much condensed and a considerably altered adaptation of the novel.

ACT I

The curtain rises on a scene in the Thebaid. Twelve cenobites are seated at a long table with Palemon in their midst presiding at a frugal and peaceful repast of bread, salt, hyssop, honey and water. One seat is empty, that of Athanaël, who is none other than Paphnutius in syllables that lend themselves better to music. As they partake of their modest fare, Athanaël comes on the scene overcome with fatigue and sorrow. He has just returned from Alexandria, and his heart is full of mourning and affliction for that city given over to sin and her chief bane, Thaïs. In his youth he himself had trodden the rosy path, but now his mind is bent on rescuing Thaïs from the abyss of the demons, despite the sage advice of Palemon not to meddle in the affairs of people of the world. As night comes on and Athanaël stretches himself before his hut, he has a vision (made apparent to the audience) of Thaïs in the theatre worshipped by the mob of enthusiasts. When dawn comes, Athanaël awakes in horror and resolves to deliver this woman from the thraldom of the flesh. Although Palemon repeats his warning, he takes his leave.

In the next scene we find him on the terrace of the sumptuous house of Nicias, one of the principal voluptuaries of Alexandria, a former friend of his and one of the numerous lovers of Thaïs. On account of his soiled and tattered garment, a servant takes him for a beggar and is minded to strike him with a stick, but Athanaël's firm calmness makes him hesitate and call his master. After Athanaël has called down execrations on the terrible city for some time, voices and laughter are heard and Nicias appears, leaning on the shoulders of Crobyle and Myrtale, two beautiful, smiling slaves. On seeing his old friend, he rejoices greatly. But when he hears of his purpose of leading the actress back to God, he laughs at him and cynically warns him, "Fear offense to Venus, the powerful goddess!—She will avenge herself." Thaïs is to come to his house that very day. In the meantime the two female slaves busy themselves with decking out the sullen monk in a tunic and embroidered cloak, all the while commenting on his beauty. In the end their attentions become too much for him and he calls on the spirit of light to strengthen his arm against the charms of the demon.

At last Thaïs comes, to spend her last day with Nicias in a festal banquet, for his wealth is nearly gone. She notices at once the fierce-eyed stranger and asks about him. Athanaël, overhearing Thaïs question Nicias about what his friend teaches, boldly announces to her that he has come to teach her "contempt of flesh—love of pain—austere penance." With ironic playfulness Thaïs twits Athanaël for his folly, and as she is about to reproduce the scene of the loves of Aphrodite and as slaves prepare to detach her robe, Athanaël escapes with a gesture of horror.

ACT II

The first scene shows a room in the house of Thaïs. A figure of Venus is in the foreground, and Byzantine rugs with embroidered pillows and lion skins add a touch of luxury. Soon Thaïs appears and soliloquizes on the emptiness of life, and the indifference and brutality of men. The thought of the ephemeral quality of beauty makes her address a despairing appeal to Venus to keep her eternally beautiful. In the midst of this Athanaël silently enters and remains at the door. Despite her pleasant raillery and her invitation to kisses, Athanaël persists in reminding her of life everlasting. All her guiles, the incense and the statue of Venus are in vain. In the end she is overawed by his sternness and his reference to death, and pale with fear and groaning, she throws herself at his feet. The voice of Nicias in the distance, gradually approaching, breaks the spell and she again becomes defiant. With the words "On thy doorsteps until dawn, I shall await thy coming!" Athanaël leaves Thaïs, who is laughing hysterically and ends by sobbing and throwing herself face down on the pillows.

The second scene shows a square facing the house of Thaïs before daylight. On the steps of a portico Athanaël is sleeping. After a time Thaïs appears with a lamp in her hand, and as she perceives Athanaël, she sets down the lamp and comes toward him. She is now ready to follow him, and he tells her that they are bound for a monastery in the west, where Albina, a daughter of the Caesars, holds her gentle sway. There he will shut her up in a narrow cell where she may repent. But first she must destroy her wealth. She is willing to part with everything except an image of Eros, which Nicias had given her. But with unrelenting anger Paphnutius dashes the statuette violently on the pavement.

As they go inside to set fire to the house, Nicias, who has won a fortune at gaming, leads a roisterly troupe on the scene and they indulge in a diversion of singing, dancing and drinking. As this goes on, Thaïs appears, hair in disorder and meanly clad, attended by a retinue of gloomy slaves. As Athanaël exhorts her to flee from the town, the crowd in angry resentment at being deprived of their idol, begins to riot, and stones fly about, one of them drawing blood from Athanaël's forehead. Only Nicias' presence of mind saves him from death. He throws handfuls of gold on the ground, and while the populace fights over it, the two escape.

ACT III.

We see them in the next scene in an oasis. The white cells of Albina's retreat appear in the distance. Thaïs is overcome by fatigue and can hardly continue. Athanaël, however, shows no mercy, but fiercely urges her on. As she is about to fall and he sees drops of blood dripping from her white feet, he relents. Prostrating himself, he kisses her bleeding feet and then refreshes her with fruits and water. As they rest, Albina and her sisters come, bringing black bread from the convent. Into their hands he delivers Thaïs and then with a cry of anguish and the words, "I shall see her no more . . . I shall see her no more!" he returns to his brethren.

The second scene shows the huts of the cenobites on the Nile again. For twenty days Athanaël has neither eaten nor drunk. As the monks discuss the coming of a simoon, Athanaël comes out of his hut and passes among them without seeing them. In vain he has tried to get rid of the image of the beautiful woman he has saved. In despair he confesses to Palemon and falls stunned with shame at his feet. Falling asleep, he sees Thaïs appear, luminous in the gloom, first as a courtesan as she was, and then dying in the monastery in the desert. Awakening, he rushes wildly into the desert, as the stage becomes dark and thunder resounds.

The last scene shows the garden of the monastery, where, in the shade of a fig tree, Thaïs lies as if dead. Her companions and Albine surround her and look upon her body disfigured by penance. As they offer up prayers for her, Athanaël comes on

the scene, hardly containing his wild despair. On his knees he drags himself close to Thaïs, and tells her that he had lied to her and that nothing matters in life but love. But it is too late. With the words "Ah! . . . Heaven! . . . I see God!", she passes away and Athanaël with a troubled cry falls prostrate beside her.

If the libretto alone is considered, one is immediately forced to give expression to disappointment in comparing it with the novel of Anatole France. The number of words which can be sung in an evening makes it impossible to run through the gamut of emotions and to trace the feelings of the characters with the psychological motivation that distinguishes the model. It is a great pity that the opera offers no opportunity to picture Thaïs as a soul blindly groping for light and bravely struggling to climb out of the mire in which her early environment had caused her to sink. Athanaël's terrible struggle to free himself from his self indicted weakness of carnality and to regain his peace of mind, receives a scantiness of treatment that diminishes the dramatic force. Nicias, too, has no chance to display his original scintillating brilliancy, and is here reduced to a mere voluptuary, who serves to typify a host of weaklings who have squandered their all to enjoy the love of Thaïs. At the end of the second act he degenerates into a gambler, à la Balzac, who recoups his fortune by gaming.

But the music surrounds the whole with a poetic halo that renders these defects partially imperceptible and has made *Thaïs* one of the most popular operas of the age. According to Henry T. Finck in *Massenet and his Operas*, Paul Gallet furnished one of the best plots ever borrowed from a novel and gave Massenet a subject "peculiarly suited to him, with his penchant for treating the conflict of worldly and religious emotions." And he wrote some of his most inspired music for it. Finck selects as particularly beautiful and impressive the intermezzo entitled *Meditation Religieuse—Symphonie*, that occurs for the first time after the conversion of Thaïs at the end of Act II, Scene I, and is again used with great effect in the oasis and once more in the death scene "to delineate the last transport of her soul." It consists of a solo for violins accompanied by harp and strings, and elicited such applause

that it was encored at many performances. The lovely duo in the oasis beginning with "Baigne d'eau tes mains et tes lèvres" is charaterized by Finck as the gem of the opera. In general, *Thaïs* is characterized by a sweetness and variety of melody, which caused the opera to become such a favorite that Oscar Hammerstein was forced to complain that the public ignored other operas, wanting to hear *Thaïs* and *Thaïs* alone.

Much of the success of the opera was undoubtedly due to the splendid cast that was assigned to it. If it were not an historic fact that Massenet wrote his opera for Sibyl Sanderson, who in 1894 created the title role in Paris, one could readily take it for granted that he had conceived it for Mary Garden, for to quote Finck again, "it fits her personality and her art like a glove." And when Oscar Hammerstein succeeded in luring her with American gold from the Opéra-Comique in Paris, she made her American début at the Manhattan Opera House on November 25, 1908, as Thaïs in Massenet's opera. She was most ably supported by Maurice Renaud as Athanaël, and Charles Dalmores as Nicias. And with this superb cast the opera came into its own after the halting start made nearly fifteen years before at Paris with the American prima donna, Sybil Sanderson, Delmas and Alvarez filling the same roles. In February 1917, the spell of associating only Mary Garden with *Thais* was broken, and Geraldine Farrar began to interpret this role to American audiences with Amato as Athanaël and Botta as Nicias. According to Finck in the *Nation* of Feb. 22, 1917, Geraldine Farrar fitted the role perfectly, but he remarks that she would have done much better some years ago, at least from the theatrical point of view, for while her voice had grown fuller, so had also her physique, and her features were somewhat less mobile than they would have been earlier. Amato also suffered by comparison with Maurice Renaud.

PAUL WILSTACH'S "THAIS".

The success of *Thaïs* as an opera moved Paul Wilstach to revert to the original novel and try to dramatize it for the stage. He called it *Thaïs, "The Story of a Sinner who Became a Saint and a Saint who Sinned."* It was produced in New York City on March 14, 1911, at the Criterion Theatre by Joseph M. Gaites under the stage direction of Lawrence Marston. The play is

in four acts and was published in Indianapolis in 1911. It cannot be said that the opera was left entirely out of consideration for there are many details that remind one of it. For instance a reference to a simoon and the dogged determination of Damiel (alias Paphnutius) to await Thais' repentance on her doorstep are undoubtedly borrowed from Louis Gallet's libretto. In many other respects that will become partially evident from the synopsis that follows, Wilstach follows Anatole France more closely. But on the whole, this play is just as far removed from the letter and spirit of Anatole France's novel as the opera. In fact, morally and esthetically, the tone of the work is much lower. Efforts, altogether too obviously revealed, are made to appeal to the baser impulses of human nature and to deprive the spectators of their critical faculties by a generous display of the female form. For example, when Thaïs appears to Damiel in his labored dream at the end of Act I, the stage direction reads (page 23), "Gradually the accustomed eye defines . . . the figure of Thaïs wrapped in a diaphanous veil of rosy tints. She postures with grace, the lines of her limbs and body and arms dissolving from one pose to another. At last her plastic caresses are directed to Damiel beneath her, and she puts into her movement every allurement her art can suggest," etc. Again at the beginning of Act II, when Crobyle, a slave girl appears, the stage direction reads, "A beautiful Greek slave girl, her nakedness draped in jeweled transparencies, runs out of the house." These crudities appear throughout the play and serve to drag the old saintly legend down to a low level. Psychologic motivation is almost entirely lacking. Damiel does not seem sure of his motives from the start and Thaïs is nothing more than a vain actress with an abnormal penchant for as many lovers as possible. Nicias is here a jealous lover who is only lukewarm in his friendship to Damiel at the start and comes to hate him later on, when he has impressed Thaïs by his sonorous rhetoric. The many characters (38 in number without taking account of the supernumeraries) add little to the dramatic force of the play, but furnish a few humorous conversations and add to the spectacular effect. Those who filled the chief roles were:

THAIS ..... Constance Collier
DAMIEL ..... Tyrone Power
NICIAS ..... Arthur Forrest

ACT I

The curtain rises on a group of anchorites before a number of baked-clay huts in the Theban desert. Damon, a priest from Alexandria, has just arrived and seeks Damiel to ask him for permission to share the peace of his retreat. While they are talking about the wickedness of the evil city, Flavian, the deacon, and Palemon appear. The former has just found a wounded bird in a trapper's net and the latter brings a basket of the products of his garden. They discourse on Damiel's sanctity and his passion for the salvation of souls. As Palemon enters his cell, Damiel returns from his meditation in the desert. His heart is full of zeal to return to Alexandria, the city of his youthful follies, and to rescue it from the evil influence of the great actress and courtesan, Thaïs. She appears to him in his dreams every night and beckons him on. Flavian ventures to express his suspicion of his motives and is gently rebuked for his thoughts. The release of the female bird from the net by the male that now lies wounded under Flavian's care is construed by Damiel as an omen from God, and when he had interviewed Damon, the priest from Alexandria, Heaven was thought to have spoken a second time. As night draws near, he makes preparation to enter his cell, but shrinks back in horror at the last moment, as if dreading a renewal of the frightful combat of which he had told Flavian. Instead he stretches himself out on a rude cot before the door of his cell and falls asleep. A vision of Thaïs appears and disturbs his dreams. His groans and cries awaken his brothers, who rush to his side. Awakening, Damiel reveals the nature of his dream and his firm determination to go to Alexandria to save Thaïs as a result of this third Divine revelation. He grasps the rood, and holding it before him, walks forth across the sands in the direction of the city.

ACT II

The scene shows a marble terrace before the house of Thaïs at Alexandria. Everything indicates luxury. At the rise of the curtain the hum of the crowd may be heard from the street below, for the people are paying homage to Thaïs after her performance as Polyxena. Adhemes, Thaïs' head servant, and Cephenes, her cook, furnish some conversation on the food

that is to be served to their mistress' guests that are soon to arrive. Soon Nicias with some friends who resemble the brilliant philosophers of Anatole France's famous banquet scene in name only, arrive and make themselves at home. As they talk vapidly about the charms of Thaïs, noise is again heard in the street. Adhemes, looking over the parapet, tells the rest that a crowd of men and boys are mocking and pulling the beard of a meanly clad fellow. A few moments later, when only Adhemes is left on the scene, Damiel enters much to the former's displeasure. Threats of physical violence have no effect on the fanatical monk, who stands his ground until Adhemes calls Nicias. On coming in, he hardly recognizes Damiel. They speak for a while about religion and philosophy, until Damiel reveals the purpose of his coming. Of course, Nicias scoffs at his plans but furnishes him with a perfumed tunic. At the approach of Thaïs, attended by a hubbub of adoration and applause, Damiel flees in confusion, obviously only to give Thaïs an opportunity to show how complete her control over her court of lovers is. After a generous distribution of caresses on her part and a return from her admirers in the form of the most abject flattery, Thaïs' attention is called to the arrival of a new lover. The stranger is summoned and examined with deep curiosity. Acting in almost kittenish fashion, she circles around him and begins to try her allurements on him. First she tries a hymn of Sappho and then in the words of the stage direction, "Drawing nearer and nearer, she postures about him caressingly." But all in vain. Damiel sees only the hideousness of her soul. Her court finally breaks out in laughter and jeers at him, but Damiel expresses his defiance. He will await her change of heart, kneeling without the gate.

ACT III

The scene is the Temple of Love in the garden surrounding Thaïs' house. It is night. Some slaves converse about the obstinacy of Damiel in staying at his post and refusing the food that was sent to him by Thaïs. Guests soon begin to come out from the festal banquet, and several couples meet and disappear in the shadows beneath low hanging boughs. Finally Nicias and Thaïs appear. For once she is serious and speaks of weari-

ness. The words of Damiel have had their effect and her conversation with Nicias, who tries to talk her out of this mood, is full of rhetorical emptiness. At the end it seems that he has been successful, for after much caressing she promises to send Damiel away, but not until after she has had a final interview with him. Nicias then leaves. As she lies at full length admiring her beauty in a mirror, Damiel appears through the shadows. He cannot be dismissed so easily. No matter how strict his persecution may become, he will not return to the desert until his plans are accomplished. Despairing of this plan, Thaïs again enters into conversation with him and learns of his determination to lead her to Albina's convent. A flood of rhetorical argument is again let loose, in which Thaïs proves to be no match for Damiel. As he calls attention to her fading beauty, she becomes hysterical and drives him away. As a distraction she summons her friends to continue their revelry. But she finds that her taste for dancing is gone, especially after some of the Greeks had revealed their reasons for discarding their aging sweethearts. When it has become very late the crowd departs and only Nicias remains. Finally he too, full of rage for what he calls Damiel's preferment, is dismissed. Then Damiel, when called, mysteriously reappears and Thaïs makes her last despairing attempt. Letting fall her mantle from her shoulder, she begins to envelop him with caresses. Damiel struggles heroically against her wiles and in the end Thaïs is forced to admit her defeat. Placing her hand in his, she submits to being led away, but not until after Nicias has roundly cursed Damiel for what he calls his hypocrisy. The curtain falls as Damiel leads Thaïs majestically forth as to victory.

ACT IV

As Scene I, a tableau is inserted, which shows how Thaïs and Damiel approach the convent and how Albina and her White Sisters receive the former into their keeping.

Scene II shows the courtyard of the retreat of the White Sisters, on the sea-coast near Alexandria. Several nuns discuss Thaïs' condition and the nearness of her end. One is convinced that Damiel loved Thaïs and Albina expresses the hope that Heaven might take Thaïs before his return, if such were the case. As they talk about bringing Thaïs out into the

courtyard, a nun enters as if pursued. She has seen Damiel straying in indecision about the gate of the convent. Soon Thaïs comes out leaning on two White Sisters. It has been six months since she had been in the cell in which Damiel had sealed her. As they converse, Thaïs fortells Damiel's arrival, and a moment later, as the two nuns retreat, Damiel rushes in and falls prostrate at Thaïs' feet. He tells of his struggles in the desert, of his folly to have missed his opportunity to enjoy her love. But Thaïs with saintly resignation gently rebukes him and soon passes away. Damiel's words, giving a slightly different turn to the ending of Anatole France's novel, end the play., "Oh, miracle! Wonderful are the ways of the Lord, who sent me to save Thaïs, the Courtesan, that I might be saved by Thaïs the Saint."

As can be seen from this synopsis, Wilstach's attempt was not felicitous. The play apparently has not held the stage. It also called forth the very scathing criticism of William Winter as printed in *Harpers* Weekly of April 1, 1911 (Vol. 55, pt. 1) under the title of *Another Erring Sister.* The sensual element seems to have been emphasized to such an extent that Winter was led to call the whole play "a specious, hypocritical pretense of teaching a 'moral lesson' by showing a disgusting spectacle of female depravity and commingled masculine infatuation and debauchery."

The sole public gain from the presentation of this play— "dramatically flimsy and stupid and reprehensible" — according to Winter was that it brought back to the stage a certain Tyrone Power, who acted the part of the hermit. His art was at as high a level as was possible in a play of such character. Constance Collier acted Thaïs and to quote Winter again, she seemed "intent to substitute for dramatic talent a copious revelation of her mature physical charms." The action of the play also drags and the dialogue at times is weighted down with rhetoric. On the whole Wilstach's attempt was unsuccessful and has tended to bring the legend down to a lower plane.

THE MOTION PICTURE.

The Thaïs legend since its origin had gone through many changes and distortions. In general, Paphnutius was gradually degenerating more and more from the impassible, ascetic saint of the desert of the Thebaid into a weak and spineless neurotic. Thaïs on the other hand was becoming stronger and stronger character. When she had decided on a course of life, she never swerved from it. At first she excels as a courtesan, but turning saint, she attains undying fame also in this role. The motion picture follows this trend. Both the novel of Anatole France and Massenet's opera served as models for the motion picture scenario of the film spectacle that was presented early in 1918. The cast was as follows:

THAÏS—Mary Garden.
PAPHNUTIUS—Hamilton Revelle.
LOLLIUS—Crawford Kent.
MADRINUS—Lionel Adams.
NICIAS—Charles Trowbridge.
MOTHER SUPERIOR—Alice Chapin.
NUN—Margaret Townsend.

Interest was naturally centered in Mary Garden, who had scored her first American triumph in the opera. According to L. R. Harrison who reviewed the Goldwyn film, her performance on the screen was a delightful surprise. "She carried the role without marring theatrical affectations through with so much dignity at times that she was perilously near losing the characterization."

The novel forms the main basis for the screen version, but a touch is added here and there from the opera. Two new characters are introduced and the events are distorted now and then to suit cinema requirements. Much greater emphasis is laid on the sensual elements, of which there are such great possibilities in this theme. As is only natural, spectacular and scenic effects are added to appeal to the craving for sensation and visual effects on the part of the spectators.

The story of the film and the scenario by Edfird A. Bingham is told by Elizabeth B. Peterson in the *Motion Picture Classic* of February 1918. It opens in Thaïs' gardens, where she is reclining indolently on a magnificent couch sumptuously spread

with purple. Her feline nature is graphically brought out by her sudden attack upon and reconciliation with a slave girl, who had knocked over her much beloved statue of Eros.

At the distance of about a league lives Paphnutius, one of the handsomest and most virile men of his day. He was the sole heir of a wealthy family, but had already wearied of his riches and the pleasure that was to be had in Alexandria. As he is listening to the persuasive eloquence of a godlike priest, Macrinus, and was meditating upon giving up the vanities of his present mode of life to embrace Christianity and a life of Christian service, Nicias, an elegant, cynical man of the world, is ushered in and expresses his contempt for Christian thought. But his words have no effect upon his friend, until he speaks of Thaïs. With her he tries to tempt him back to the world by challenging him to try to resist her charms. So, to please his friend, Paphnutius agrees to accompany him.

In her home we meet them next, guests of the brilliant and sensuously beautiful Thaïs. In the assemblage was one who followed every one of her movements with darkening, jealous glances, and whose hand frequently strayed to his dagger, when an admirer looked at her with more than ordinary interest. It was Lollius, a young patrician, who had inspired in her the only true love of her whole career. When Thaïs, implored by her friend, Nicias, to try to save Paphnutius for him, tried all her allurements on him, confident because her charms had never failed, the facial expression of Lollius became more and more sinister. And when, to cap the climax, he was dismissed and Paphnutius and Nicias were retained, his rage knew no bounds. Soon thereafter Nicias also departed with a look of satisfaction on his face. But Thaïs was playing a losing game with her melancholy guest. All her provocations were futile. Paphnutius only clenched his hands more tightly, as temptation grew stronger, and conquered in the end.

Outside Lollius was waiting in the moonlight, and as he saw Paphnutius leave the house, he jumped on him in the darkness with upraised dagger. Paphnutius, larger and more athletic, thrust up Lollius' arm, receiving an ugly wound on the shoulder. A furious tussle ensues in which the half-crazed Lollius loses his life.

This tragedy left Paphnutius a prey to a remorseful conscience. The glee with which Thaïs, accustomed to seeing men die for her, had watched the fray, added to his anguish. He could not banish her from his thoughts. To the priest, Macrinus, he confessed all and an eloquent and terrible denunciation followed. His suggestion that he go to Antinoë, met with immediate approval and Paphnutius left for the desert at once.

We now find him on the sunbaked, sandy plains of Antinoë. Paphnutius is still scourging himself with the memory of Thaïs and the crime committed on her account. One day brother Palemon came from Alexandria with tales of the ungodly life led at Alexandria with Thaïs playing the leading role in all the sinfulness. Suddenly Paphnutius made up his mind to return to Alexandria and to try to rescue her soul and incidentally deliver Alexandria from her toils. His plans meet with the approval of the brotherhood, to whom he broaches the subject.

After days of weary journeying he again reached Alexandria where his friend, Nicias, received him kindly. When he learned his purpose, he scoffed good-naturedly at him and furnished him with exquisite raiment to appear more respectably before Thaïs. She in the meantime was beginning to tire of the monotony of her daily orgy of pleasures and felt that her beauty was fading. When Paphnutius came upon her, as she looked into the mirror, and said, "The wages of sin is death. You will grow old!" she started up with wildly beating heart, but immediately tried to recover her composure. Although Paphnutius' first attempt was unsuccessful, he refused to give up. To humor her, he attended the brilliant banquet of the old patrician, Cotta. The wild revelry here made the already world-weary Thaïs still more tired of her past life of sin, and she began to think back to the days of her childhood, especially of Ahmes, the Christian slave through whom she had been baptized. The persuasions of Paphnutius began to soften her more and more, until finally she consented to be led to Albina's convent.

The burning of the property follows. In the riot that ensues Nicias does not extricate his friends in the cynical fashion of the novel, but dies of a dagger wound in the back, as a faithful friend. The journey to the monastery follows. Then comes Paphnutius' return to the desert and his yearning to possess Thaïs. He has an intuition of her end and in frenzied despair he hurries back to the convent only to see her die.

As can be seen from this recital of the story, the legend has been gradually descending to a much lower plane. The original moral tone is lost and greater emphasis is laid on sentimentality and sensuality. Even Nicias with his delightful cynicism is transformed into a faithful friend, ready to offer up his life for his friends.

It is to be regretted that the Thaïs legend has fallen on evil days, and we sincerely hope that the form it has taken since the opera may be but a passing phase, and that if there is a future for the legend, we may soon return to the chaster and purer conception of Hrotsvitha or to the more brilliant version of Anatole France.

CHAPTER V.

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